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SEMESTER IV

COURSE NO. 401

DYNAMICS OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR POLITICS

Course Coordinator
Dr. V. Nagendra Rao
vvnagendra@gmail.com

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1.1 UNDERSTANDING STATE POLITICS: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK (MYRON WEINER AND IQBAL NARAIN)

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

- 1.1.0 Objectives**
- 1.1.1 Introduction**
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1.1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will study the reasons for the emergence of State Politics as a distinct field in studying political development in India and the contributions of Myron Weiner and Iqbal Narain to this process. After going through this lesson, you will be able to know:

- The importance states gained in the political development of India from 1960s onwards;
- The reasons for the emergence of State Politics as a distinct field to understand political phenomenon in India;
- the contributions of Myron Weiner and Iqbal Narain in providing theoretical framework to understand state politics in India; and
- the broader trends in state politics of contemporary India.

1.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study of 'State Politics' as a distinct academic field emerged in India in 1960s. There are many reasons for this, one obviously being the moment from single party dominant polity to the plural multi-party system. From late 1960s onwards many splinter groups of Congress Party started gaining their own identity and foothold in various states of India. The reorganization of India into various linguistic states also significantly contributed to this process. During the 1970s the newly emerged forces gained further momentum and seriously challenged the authority of the Congress not only at the Centre but also in many states. By 1980s this led to the raise of many regional parties in various states of India, from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in down South to Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir in up North. This changing composition of political landscape in India obviously demanded serious attention from the scholars of various disciplines more so of Political Scientists. Hence, many Political Scientists started studying state politics while focusing on historical identity of the state, its political status before independence, its role in the freedom struggle, the impact of integration of princely states or of linguistic re-organization, geographical location, infrastructure manifesting itself in social pluralism, religious, regional and caste dynamics, the level and pattern of economic development, human resources, the level of education and urbanization, etc.

To understand the dynamics of State Politics in India, many scholars attempted to develop theoretical frameworks through which the realities at the ground level can be captured. Among these, two are distinct: Myron Weiner and Iqbal Narain. Myron Weiner organised two seminars in USA, one at University of Chicago in 1961 and other at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1964. Myron Weiner published the proceedings of the MIT conference as a book, *State Politics in India* (1968), the first one on state politics. This was followed by Iqbal Narain's edited book with the same title in 1976 in which an article on state politics of Jammu and Kashmir also appeared for the first time. These two books signalled emergence of State Politics as a distinct academic field. In this introductory lesson we will study these developments in the field of state politics in detail and their importance in familiarising us with diverse patterns and complexities of Indian polity, while specifically focusing on the two scholars mentioned here.

1.1.2 STUDYING STATE POLITICS: A FRAMEWORK

State Politics assumes an intimate denotation and connotation, particularly within a federal system where states operate as units of the nation, though not as independent and truly autonomous political entities. The creation of a federal structure implies the existence of territorial, cultural, linguistic, religious and socio-economic differences among the people of a nation, which make the states, differ greatly in the degree to which they fit this pattern. In the organization and spirit of their politics the states vary markedly. It is true that the impact of national policies and parties powerfully influence the form and behaviour of state systems. But it is equally true that this impact strikes different states differently, contributing to the oddities and variations in organisation and spirit of state politics. State politics, thus, provides an arena for basic and exclusive study and research.

However, the pre-eminent structure in India, characterised by a distinct bias in favour of the centre seems to remain a pertinent factor for why the Indian states failed to attract scholarly attention for a long time. But more than the uniformity in the constitutional structures and the unitarised federal set-up, a considerable disinterestedness displayed in the study of State politics may be attributed to a variety of other important reasons. It is argued quite often that states as political systems are artificial categories for analysis. Unlike various other segments of the policy, they are not "natural" functional entities. It is not without a cause that international scholarly attention, with quite a few exceptions, has been directed only to the national systems of new states and not to the subordinate units. A second consideration is that within the states, public attention cannot be focussed sharply on state affairs undistracted by extraneous factors; political divisions cannot occur freely on state questions alone: national issues, national campaigns, and national parties project themselves into the affairs of states. Political conflict on state issues may tend to be blurred or smothered to the extent that most of the people place a high premium on a set of national policies of concern.

Finally, the unique phenomenon of a one-party dominant, system, at least before the sixth parliamentary elections of 1977, has often been interpreted as a factor frustrating an autonomous growth of state politics. It used to be argued that the fact of the same party being in power at the centre and in the states maintains the authority of the central government, which, could afford to

ride rough over the state government by compelling the state unit to comply with the directions of the Congress High Command.

Consequently, a host of studies have been conducted on the government and politics in the states, applying the historical or legal-institutional or even behavioural and comparative methods, and all of them have viewed state politics from the national rather than the state perspective. Rajni Kothari while trying to present a developmental profile of Indian polity in his classic work, which excludes an analytic treatment of government and administration, accepts that “the focus of this book is on characteristic patterns and interrelationships that inform the operation of the Indian political system as a whole, and *we do not intend to get lost in the esoteric details of its many constituents*”.

Perhaps the need to study state politics from the state rather than the national perspective was first felt by the Committee on State Politics in India, "an informal group" organised by Myron Weiner, under the auspices of the Committee on South Asia of the Association for Asian Studies. The conceptual framework of state politics in the U.S.A. was developed by V. O. Key, Jr., and by the latter part of the fifties and the first part of the sixties, the study of state politics had re-entered the mainstream of political research and experienced changes similar to those of other fields in political science.

In India the admonition to the effect that state questions should be considered separately on their merits, came from Iqbal Narain. He felt that a probe into the intricate labyrinth of state politics is basic to an intelligent, meaningful and critical understanding of Indian politics as a whole. It is quite aptly assumed that an analysis of state politics will yield insights into those features of the political process which are common to political phenomena in general. The research, while using the states as laboratories, would lead to an understanding of those factors which effect all political institutions and the behaviour of all political actors. True, India has a unitarised federal structure where states are the least autonomous units of a centralised 'union' and there is a striking uniformity in the constitutional framework of the Centre and States. But states can be studied as constituent units of a larger system, and the units themselves are large enough to be studied as total systems. Not only that 'the states have important powers over agricultural development, education, and rural taxation', but also that frequently the state governments have been able to exercise considerable influence and to extract a number of

concessions from the centre on a variety of issues. Moreover, with the gradual passing away of the all India leadership and its replacement by state-based leadership with the erosion of the national movement-oriented support-base at the state and local levels and above all, with the weakening of the sense of national identification in the wake of the rapidly developing egotism of states in India, the phenomena of state politics have come to assume strategic importance in the context of the Indian political system.

Closer examination of the Indian political system would reveal that each state has in fact been undergoing its own pattern of political development and its own internal political crises. States differ markedly in respect of the spirit of their politics; and the differences in interaction patterns, social mores, and political belief structures contrast sharply. Indeed, the impact of individual life style of state and the pattern of its policy-making cannot be ignored. Nor can one ignore the impact of legal and political behaviour of states upon behaviour patterns that are central to understanding the functioning of the larger national system. In a host of interesting ways, geographically contiguous states have adopted policies that differ radically from one another and touch the very roots of social structure.

And above all, the justification for analysing the constitutional-political categories that exist as states in the Indian governmental situation becomes still more relevant, when one examines a critical phase of change and transformation in the course of development of Indian political system after the fourth general election of 1967, better known as the phase of coalition politics in states. No doubt, one of the major aspects of process of political development in India has been closely related to the issue of coalition-making ever since independence, but the coalition politics in the states between 1967 and 1972 has different conceptual connotation. During the period, state politics became a dramatic focus of attention, as states came to the forefront, when they were under stress and were struggling to cope with and adapt to the changing conditions of Indian policy.

1.1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF MYRON WEINER

In 1963, Myron Weiner published an article that regarded as one of his most important short pieces on Indian politics. In that article, he posited the existence in India of what he called two 'political cultures', one that manifested itself in the districts and localities, 'both urban and rural',

and the other that inhabited the national capital, whose denizens occupied the Indian Civil Service, the Planning Commission, and the leading body in the governing party, the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress. Weiner clearly thought carefully when he chose names for these two cultures. He rejected the idea that one was a modern culture, the other traditional because, as he said, “there are aspects of both modernity and traditionalism penetrating both views”. He chose instead the terms, ‘elite’ political culture and ‘mass’ political culture. The former was elite not only or even primarily in social background, but in its outlook which, despite Weiner's recognition that it contained traditional components, was modernistic and rationalistic.

According to Weiner both cultures were also expanding: the elite culture was radiating out from its political centre in New Delhi, while the mass culture was expanding from the localities up to “the state legislative assemblies, state governments and state administrations”. This resulted in the emergence of state as an important factor in the political arithmetic of Indian politics. Recognising this reality he organised two conferences on state politics and brought out a book out of it. He prepared a framework for the authors to analyse the political process within the state. The essays in his book compare and analyse the political processes of eight of the seventeen states. The contributors have attempted to treat the various states within a common framework, illuminating the changing patterns of political participation in India, the problem of integration within the states, the many state party systems that they have developed, and the performance of the state governments. Myron Weiner's approach treats each state as a constituent unit within a larger system, but nonetheless also as a separate political system. Thus, he says that the states can be studied “as constituent units of a larger system, and the units themselves are large enough to be studied as a total system”. In fact, he tries to describe and analyse “the political process in a single state” and relates that process to (a) the socio-economic environment in which politics occurs, and (b) the performance of the Government. Myron Weiner's framework, thus, reflects distinct biases towards the ‘systems approach’, but with an explicit difference.

1.1.4 IQBAL NARAIN'S FRAMEWORK

An analytic framework evolved by an indigenous political scientist like Iqbal Narain for the study of state politics in India, though draws heavily upon “systemic approach”, is added by quite a few relevant dimensions. He has built it “with a difference in so far as it insists on its application with a development and hence, essentially dynamic perspective”. He organised seminar in Rajasthan and invited scholars from most of the states in India to present a study on their respective states. As already pointed out, the State of Jammu and Kashmir also covered in this project and a first academic study on State Politics of Jammu and Kashmir was undertaken. He developed a framework and asked the participant to present papers on their respective state politics following the same framework. While developing the framework, Iqbal Narain delineated the conceptual image which consists of no less than five determinants: institutional, physiological levels of politics, socio-economic and political, and the elite structure. He then proceeds to construct a three-dimensional framework consisting of the contextual, structural and operational. In the contextual dimension, he includes following components : (1) history of a state: historical identity of the state, its political status before independence, its role in the freedom- struggle, and the impact of integration of princely states or of linguistic re-organisation: (ii) the geographical locale; (iii) infra-structure manifesting itself in social pluralism, (iv) the level and pattern of economic development; (v) human resources; (vi) the level of education; and (vii) urbanisation. The structural dimension, according to him, consists of formal constitutional structure-office of the Governor, office of the Chief Minister, the Ministry and the Legislature; political institutions and processes- political parties, pressure groups and elections; and administrative framework. In the third category of operational dynamics the author limits himself to role orientation of the actors, political behaviour and functional dimension having a distinctive job connotation.

Though the analytical framework propounded by Iqbal Narain for the study of state politics in India draws heavily upon systematic approach, it is added by quite a few relevant dimensions. The analytic framework informing Iqbal Narain's collection of papers view the political system of a state in India as a point of confluence of national, state and local politics, as a system of inter-connection and interactions between the governing-elite structure on the one hand and political institutions, process and policies on the other. State politics emergences in

Iqbal Narain's book, basically as a case of linkage politics and its future are also the prospects of democratic polity in the country, as a whole, would depend on a movement away from politics of self-preservation of the elites to a politics of welfare of the masses; from a politics of drift to a politics of purposiveness; from politics of status quo to politics of socio-economic change; and above all, from politics of promise to politics of performance.

For Narain, the conceptual framework can be conjured up in terms of the nature of state politics which, in turn, leads to a discussion of its determinants. The most important determinants of state politics in India are: institutional, physiological levels of politics, socio-economic, political and the elite structure. He then proceeds to construct a three dimensional framework consisting of the contextual, structural and operational dimensions.

In contextual dimensions, he includes the components such as History of state, historical identity of the state, its political status before independence, its role in the freedom struggle, the impact of the integration of princely states or of linguistic reorganization, the geographical locale, infrastructure manifesting itself in social pluralism, the level and patterns of economic development, human resources and the level of education.

The structural dimension, according to him consists of the formal and constitutional structure like office of the Governor, Office of the Chief Ministers the ministry and the legislature, political institutions, parties and pressure groups and elections and administrative framework.

In the operational dimensions, Narain limits himself to the role orientation of the actors in the drama of state politics. He also discusses the behavioural aspect and functional aspect in the context of state politics.

1.1.5 LIMITATIONS OF FRAMEWORKS

A penetrating view of the two frameworks, one proposed by Myron Weiner and other by Iqbal Narain, however, would demonstrate that each of them suffers from obvious limitations, Weiner's framework is primarily meant for describing and analysing some pre-conceived aspects of single states. No doubt he expected that the framework would simultaneously enable him to compare a set of themes but it was too lop-sided to have in its compass the full-blown

portrait of state politics, let alone providing bases for comparison. Weiner himself admits: "...it seemed to both editor and authors that it would be inappropriate at this stage of research...to impose a common framework".

Though Iqbal Narain puts forth the first all-encompassing analytic framework, its application by different authors contributing to his volume fails to clarify some of the fundamental analytic problems in this area. The studies conducted on the outlines of the framework "give, in the main a political aerial survey rather than a penetrating study of the forces operating at the state level". Indeed, the framework appears to be too complex to be employed successfully in studying the politics of states. He has himself frankly acknowledged that "...the framework could not be uniformly applied as data and information on all its dimensions have not been easy to obtain".

The limitations of these frameworks, however, must not lead to reflect the belief that the tools and techniques being used in other areas of the science of politics cannot be fruitfully applied to the study of state politics. It is true that each study is circumscribed by the nature and range of its subject and may not afford to aim at comparing length the common patterns obtainable in various states, Still a conceptual framework is called for, if the study proposes to go beyond a description of formal structures to an analysis of the effect of variations in these structures on political process by focussing upon the behavioural characteristics of state politics.

Any study may draw freely on the tools provided by the analytic framework of Iqbal Narain and take advantage of the insights emanated from Weiner's design. It may also add some new dimensions for having a consummate imaginative penetration into the problem. Treating the state as a constituent unit within a larger system, but nonetheless as a distinct political system and taking into account the institutional, physiological, socio-economic and political determinants of the conceptual image, it may proceed to analyse the context of political development in the state. The study may further aim at inquiring into the structural and operational dimensions of both the formal and informal institutions in the state.

Thus instead of anchoring the study firmly to institutional and formal analysis or concentrating it only to the crude empirical evaluation of the political process or party system or policy making and so on, one should attempt at depicting to a full-blooded and life size portrait of state politics.

1.1.6 STATE POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

Along with Myron Weiner and Iqbal Narain many other scholars attempt to theorise state politics in India. More recently, Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Pulshekhar attempted to capture the nuances of state politics in contemporary India. According to them, the rise of state politics as an autonomous domain invites and requires theoretical attention by students of comparative politics. According to them, “the state politics in India has broken free of the logic of national politics and has acquired a rhythm and logic of its own”. This manifests itself in many ways related to one another.

First, states have emerged as *the* effective arena of political choice. If the people voted in state assembly elections held in 1970s and 1980s as if they were choosing the prime minister, they now vote in the parliamentary elections as if they are choosing their chief minister. In their eyes an individual constituency is too small and the country too big; it is at the level of the state that the voters make their choice.

Second, the nature of political choice now varies from state to state. We have moved a long way from the old Congress vs. Opposition scenario that was replicated all over the country. Nor have we entered a multi-party system in all the states. The Lok Sabha may present the picture of an intensely fragmented multi-party system, but at the state level we can find all kinds of contests: bipolar, triangular, four cornered or even more fragmented.

Third, ‘regional parties’ or state-wide parties, have become more salient than ever before. One cannot even begin to play the favourite national sport of ‘*kaun banega PM*’ without factoring in the prospects and the proclivities of the AIADMK, TDP, SP, BSP and the TMC, even if one overlooks the regional parties that are now somewhat stable allies of the UPA or the NDA. The state units of national parties too are more independent, at least in terms of the issues, strategies and styles, if not leadership, than used to be the case. In some non-trivial ways the CPM units in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura are three different parties.

Fourth, following from the first three, if the unit and the nature of political choice varies from state to state, so does the outcome. The changing fortunes of political parties are not replicated across state boundaries in ways that was the case in the past.

Fifth, governmental outcomes have become more variegated at the state level. Citizens' access to various goods and services varies across the country, within each state, district and town and even village. But the most significant variation now is the one among different states, which is a function of how everyday politics, including social movements and political struggles, relates to the governmental apparatus.

Sixth, state level politics is freer of the control of national politics and is often in a position to dictate terms to national politics. This happens in the most visible manner when state-wide parties determine the agenda of national politics or enjoy an upper hand in their bargain with national parties.

Finally, a long-term process of differentiation of political community has ensured that the citizens' identity has crystallized around states. The reorganization of states along linguistic lines had set off this process. But a political community by that time had not emerged along the boundaries of states. The recent era in the evolution of democratic politics has witnessed the emergence of states as the markers of political identity. Each state has developed a distinctive political culture, its own vocabulary of politics. Some of the long-term political trends and patterns have also differentiated along state lines.

After proposing the realities of state politics in contemporary India in above mentioned fashion, Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Pulshekar proceed further to advance ten "Theses" to conceptualise present day state politics in India, as stated below.

1. The political legacy of movements and ideologies at the state level has proved more enduring than that of institutions and organizations.
2. The emergence of states as real and imagined political communities has intensified political regionalism without weakening the ties with the larger, national unit or suppressing the emergence of sub-regional communities.
3. The greater political clout of the states and their unwillingness to share power with their sub-units has blunted the democratizing impulse of institutional reforms and accentuated inequalities across states instead of reducing differences in access to power.

4. The spread of a distinctive culture of democracy has given a regional flavour to political practice without ensuring a democratic culture, as emancipatory ideas confront majoritarianism and the populist tendency faces pragmatism.
5. Higher and more intense political participation at the state level has widened the base of democracy and sustained its legitimacy without enriching the quality of democratic outcomes.
6. Political regimes at the state level acquire their anchorage as well as bondage from the rise of dominant castes to power, which represents as well as halts the transfer of power to lower social orders.
7. As state politics gains greater autonomy vis-à-vis national politics and the central government, its capacity to resist corporate and other organized interests appears severely eroded, often producing regimes that act as the agents of dominant classes.
8. A system of competitive convergence has meant that the opening up of the format of party competition has not led to greater and more meaningful political choices for the citizen.
9. Struggles and movements seek to rupture the convergence of the political establishment but their non-political character limits their capacity to affect the political agenda.
10. A rise in the politics of coercion and state response to it leads to a spiral of shrinking space for democratic politics.

By advancing above theses or trends, Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Pulshekar believe that these trends more or less stay for a long time. They also believe that some consequences of the rise of states as an autonomous platform of politics are clearly good with the potential of steering democracy towards further expansion. Not only is the possibility of greater autonomy for the states in itself a welcome feature, it has also led to a differential party system that reflects the social context more clearly than was the case earlier. A new set of elites has been able to enter politics through the rise of regional parties, and gates have been opened up for higher participation in politics by more diverse sections than before.

However, it may be too early to celebrate this development without keeping in mind the constraints within which it takes shape, states Yadav and Pulshekar. In the first place, this

development does not help us overcome the indifferent record of India's democracy in making institutions function properly and effectively. Nor can it help overcome the fundamental constraint of being bound to a social context that is mired in complex grids of domination and exploitation. The emergence of the states as the central platform of politics might actually weaken the capacity of democratic politics to withstand the pressures of organized economic interests; and may open the doors wider for consolidation of the oligarchic control of dominant social groups, reducing the real political choices available to the citizen. But then, it is precisely this mixed balance sheet of possibilities and anxieties that makes the study of state politics an exciting and important enterprise, concludes the duo.

1.1.7 LET US SUM UP

In recent years, attention has been more sharply focussed upon the states. This is a welcome change, because state governments, more than the central government are in charge of functions relating to public welfare and the political system is so structured that a large part of political activity takes place in the states. This underlines the importance of a theoretical framework for the study of state politics. Such a framework would provide a direction, a focus and a framework of analysis to the increasing research on State Politics which otherwise seems rather isolated. The two scholars who initiated the momentum to develop a conceptual framework to understand State Politics in India are Myron Weiner and Iqbal Narain. Both of them developed two contrasting frameworks and requested scholars working on State Politics to conduct studies on their respective states. Since then the trend gained further momentum as many scholars started paying more attention to State Politics while documenting political developments across the country. With the emergence of the state as a more salient terrain for the unfolding of democratic processes and competitive politics, the importance of the study of states is even more often recognized.

1.1.8 EXERCISE

- 1 What are the reasons for emergence of State Politics as a distinct field?
- 2 Write note on contribution of Myron Weiner to State Politics in India.

- 3 What is the significance of Iqbal Narain in the growth of State Politics as a distinct academic field within Political Science discipline?
- 4 Can you identify the contrast or difference in Myron Weiner and Iqbal Narain's theoretical frameworks?
- 5 Critically analyse the trends and theses advanced by Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Pulshekar with regard to State Politics in contemporary India.

1.1.9 SOURCES

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1.2 FORMATION OF J&K PRINCELY STATE: MAJOR LANDMARKS

- Tirtharaj Bhoi

STRUCTURE

- 1.2.0 Objectives**
- 1.2.1 Introduction**
- 1.2.2 Historical Background**
- 1.2.3 The Formation of J&K Princely State**
- 1.2.4 Significance of Gulab Singh**
 - 1.2.4.1 Treaty of Amritsar
- 1.2.5 The State under Succeeding Maharajas**
- 1.2.6 Princely State at the Lapse of British Paramount**
- 1.2.7 Let Us Sum UP**
- 1.2.8 Exercise**

1.2.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will study major landmarks in the formation of Jammu and Kashmir princely State. After going through this lesson, you will be able to know:

- The historical and mythological significance of Kashmir;
- The contribution of Gulab Singh to the formation of the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir;
- the other major landmarks in the post-Gulab Singh phase, till the State merged in the Indian Union.

1.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The state of Jammu and Kashmir lie between 32°27' and 33°30' North latitudes and 74°19' and 75°20' East longitudes. It is almost entirely a mountainous region. Geographically, the state falls into four natural regions. In the south lies Jammu, the winter capital of the state; in the centre is the valley of Kashmir which contains the summer capital, Srinagar; to the north is Gilgit; and between the Kashmir valley and Tibet is the province of Ladakh. The state has a population of over 59,87,389 and it covers an area of 84,471 sq. miles. It has 58 towns 6758 villages. Situated at the apex of the Indio-Pakistan sub-continent, Kashmir is of great strategic importance owing to the fact, that to its east lie Tibet; to the north- east, Sinkiang, a province of China; to the north-west, Afghanistan and a few miles from Afghanistan lies Russian Turkestan. This actual and potential importance of Kashmir has caused the rulers of adjoining countries to cast covetous eyes on it. In 1846, the state of Jammu and Kashmir as it exists today was created by the British Government. To understand politics of contemporary Jammu and Kashmir, it is necessary to study the history of Kashmir, the mode of its creation, the history of its rulers and their efforts to get established in and maintain their hold on the people and the territory.

1.2.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is an uninterrupted series of an ancient Sanskrit written record of its history, reaching back beyond the period of the Muhammadan conquests and deserving the name of real chronicle. Kashmir has, therefore a Sanskrit chronicle of the Muslim world or Hindu and reminiscent of the chronicle of the Muslims world or medieval Europe .The earliest extent and most important of these chronicles is the Rajatarangini (i.e. stream of kings) compiled by Kalhana in about A.D. 1150. Kalhana had given an account of the region up to A.D. 1006, whereas Jonaraja up to A.D. 1420, Pandit Srivara upto A.D. 1489 and Pragyā Bhatt upto A.D. 1586 when Kashmir was annexed by the Great Mughal Akbar. Since then the history and chronicles of Kashmir have been written by many Sanskrit and Persian scholars as well as by many Western travellers. From the period of the first settlement in Kashmir to the region of Gonanda, the first Prince, the region was governed by a succession of fifty two kings of the Kaurava dynasty which ruled over it for a period of about 1266 years.

In ancient India, Kashmir had an honoured place. The chronicles speak of a glorious king of Kashmir named Gonanda who was worshipped by the region which Kailasha lights up and which the tossing Ganga clothes with soft garments. Kashmir was a part of the empire of Ashoka who laid the foundation of city of Srinagar. He is said to have introduced Buddhism in Kashmir and sent about five thousand Buddhist disciples for its propagation. Many Buddhist monasteries, therefore, came up in Kashmir during his time. He also introduced the cultivation of Saffron in the Valley and took many steps to improve agriculture. The Buddhist faith had, however, received an impetus at the hands of the Indio-Scythian rules, particularly Kanishka, Husk and Juska. The Third Buddhist Council was held in Kashmir under Kanishka's patronage and from that time Kashmir became the centre of Mahayana from where missionaries carried the doctrine to distant China, Central Asia and Tibet. But all the subsequent rulers were not supporters of Buddhism. As a result of the rise of Shiva cult and philosophy, Buddhism though lingered on for some years, but was finally replaced by the traditional Brahminism. Toleration, however, was the key note of religious policy even in those remote years and the people of different religious faith lived together amicably. After the commencement of the Christian era, the Valley was invaded by Tartaras.

In the sixth century A.D. came the white Huns. The two other notable kings in Kashmir were Pravarsena II and Lalitaditya. Whereas, Pravarsena all reigned about 700 A.D., and built his capital on the site of the present Srinagar. Lalitaditya, being the most famous of the later Hindu Kings ruled over Kashmir in the middle of the eighth century and distinguished himself by his successful campaigns in Central and Western India and Central Asia. He is said to have subdued many kings in India in a tour of conquest for 12 years and then turned his attention to Central Asia and returned victorious via Tibet. It is recorded that he was a patron of art and culture and carried out many public works and built many temples including Martanda temple. Mahmud of Ghazni is said to have attempted to invade Kashmir, but failed to effect entry. The subsequent political history of Kashmir for some hundreds of years was a succession of violent changes in which dynasty succeeded dynasty and some adventurer or other by his military talent acquired power. Towards the middle of 14th century the Muslim rule was established over the valley. This religion had found a fertile soil to grow and expand because the people had been groaning under the misrule of the later Hindu rulers, when trade had languished and agriculture was at standstill. The most notable of Muslim rulers was Sultan-Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70 A.D.) who had worked

zealously for the greater benefit of greater number and said to have introduced the vocations like carpet-weaving, paper-making, paper-mache, silk breeding, horticulture, stone-cutting, stone polishing, bottle-making, gold-beating, shawl-weaving etc. in Kashmir. He was generous and brave and earned the goodwill of Hindus who had been persecuted earlier. He encouraged learning, fine arts and polytechnics. He had also invited to Kashmir skilled craftsmen viz. the weavers, embroiders, wood-carvers and makers of brassware, carpets and paper-mache from Turkey, Mecca and Egypt, who were the progenitors of skilled craftsmen of today's Kashmir.

The death of this enlightened Sultan left Kashmir Valley a prey to the old anarchical influence and it was not until the conquest of the territory by Emperor Akbar towards the end of 16th century (in 1586), that a reign of order was established. Akbar had visited Kashmir thrice and during his last visit he got constructed the fort on the Hari Parbat Hill to attract the people who had fled from the valley because of the atrocities committed by Chaks. He also laid down a sound revenue system through his revenue Minister Todar Mal. Jahangir and Shah Jahan were very fond of Kashmir. They built stately mansions, planted chinars and laid out various pleasure gardens around the Dal Lake and elsewhere. The Mughal rule lasted until the middle of the 18th century, when in consequence of the decay of the imperial power, the governor of the state became independent of Delhi.

1.2.3 THE FORMATION OF J&K PRINCELY STATE: MAJOR LANDMARKS

After Mughals, Kashmir fell under Afghan despotism and the people were oppressed by a succession of governors from Kabul, each more cruel, than his predecessor. Their rapacity was inflicted on the people irrespective of religion or caste and Hindus and Muslims were alike the victims of their cruel rule. It was said of them that they thought no more of cutting off heads than of plucking flowers. When their yoke became insupportable, the Kashmiris turned for aid to Ranjit Singh whose rising star was then attracting the attention of India. As a consequence of this appeal the Sikhs sent an army to Kashmir in 1814, the advance being made over the Pir Panjal. The expedition was a failure and nothing further was done until 1819 when Ranjit Singh's best general, Misr Diwan Chand, accompanied by Gulab Singh of Jammu, invaded Kashmir and after draining out the Afghan representative, Jbbar Khan, established the Sikh rule. A terrible famine

ravaged the valley in the early years of the Sikh regime. The Sikh rule had been similar to that of the Mughal.

The governors for Kashmir were appointed from Lahore and as many as ten governors were sent there during the Sikh rule. They used to govern according to their own whims and caprices. Mian Singh was the most popular Sikh Governor, and the grateful memories of his exertions to repair the damage, still linger among the people. He was unfortunately assassinated by mutinous troops.

1.2.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF GULAB SINGH

While Kashmir was passing through the later vicissitudes in its history a new power was growing in influence on the environs of the Valley. This was the authority of the Dogra Prince, Gulab Singh, one of the Ranjit Singh's favourite Lieutenants. He was appointed as Raja of Jammu with the allowance of three lakh rupees in 1820 for services rendered to the Sikh Darwar, Gulab Singh by force of character speedily organized his territory on firm lines. Gulab Singh strengthened his rule however, by adding Reasi, Rajouri, Chanani and Kishtwar to his growing empire. Kishtwar (a place which Gulab Singh never visited in his entire lifetime, not even as king) was incorporated in 1821 when Raja Mohammad Teg Singh surrendered to him at Doda without resistance. In June 1823, after some ineffectual rule, governorship of the province then passed to Gulab Singh's most trusted official, Zorawar Singh, who held it for eighteen years until his death in battle.

At first the process of swallowing cities and territories under the Kingdom of Jammu enjoyed Sikh support and was patronised by Ranjit Singh, under who Jammu operated as a subordinate state. This alliance continued until Ranjit Singh's death in 1838, by which time, Gulab Singh had served eighteen years under him and further consolidated and secured his frontiers. Two years after his mentor's (Ranjit Singh) death, Gulab Singh conquered Ladakh and Dardistan in 1840. Ladakh, a Buddhist area in Tibet, was populated by Chinese residents, not Indians. Zorawar Singh, a leading general in Gulab Singh's service, also annexed Baltistan, Skardu and Western Tibet by 1841. Eventually he established a complete domination over nearly all the regions between Kashmir and Punjab. With the result that Gulab Singh became practically the master of all the territory surrounding Kashmir.

1.2.4.1 Treaty of Amritsar

When war broke out between the British and the Sikhs Darwar, Gulab Singh took his stand very cleverly and refrained from taking sides and in 1846 after the battle of Sobraon, he acted as a mediator between the British and the Sikhs. Lord Hardinge's private papers showed him as a spy of the British and call him a 'geographical ally'. Accompanied by several other chiefs, Gulab Singh met with the Governor General at Kasur. The governor General then communicate Gulab Singh and the Sikh chief the terms of the peace which were subsequently embodied in the Treaty of Lahore of March 9, 1846. The Treaty also ensured the Sikhs recognise Gulab Singh as the rightful monarch of Kashmir, which was to be awarded him by the British in a separate agreement with him personally.

The 'Amritsar Treaty', which followed a week later (16th March 1846), formally released Gulab Singh from Sikh authority (although he had relinquished loyalties to them years earlier) and gave him the highest official standing and rank he had ever possessed. According to the Treaty, the Darwar was required to pay one and a half crore of rupees as indemnity for the expenses of the war. As the Darwar was not in a position to pay such a huge amount demanded by the British, the Maharaja transferred to the company as equivalent for one crore rupee, as his hill territories situated between Beas and the Indus including the province of Kashmir and Hazara.

Out of this ceded territory the British transferred to Gulab Singh, for sum of seven and a half million rupees, all the hilly and mountainous country situated to the east of the Indus and the west of Ravi by signing the treaty of Amritsar on 16th March, 1846. British formally invested Gulab Singh with the title of Maharaja. According to the treaty whole of the Kashmir including Ladakh and Gilgit with Balistan and the Indus valley to Chailias were transferred to Gulab Singh. He tried to consolidate peace in the otherwise deplorable conditions then prevailing in Jammu region.

1.2.5 THE STATE UNDER SUCCEEDING MAHARAJAS

In February 1856, Gulab Singh gave up his throne in favour of his son Ranbir Singh. Gulab Singh died in 1857 and in 1860, his son and successor, Ranbir Singh sent a well-equipped expedition against the mutinous chief of Gilgit and the adjoining territories, and succeeded in

finally establishing the Dogra hold on this outpost. He made many reforms for the general welfare of the masses. In 1870 Maharaja Ranbir Singh sent his troops to Hanza and Nagar and obtained their vassalage. Later, when the Afghan war was in the offing and the British were anxious to isolate Afghanistan and eliminate any possible threat from Chitral, Maharaja Ranbir Singh was encouraged to send an expedition to Chitral and obtain its vassalage. Negotiations were opened between the army officers to the Maharaja and the Mehtar of Chitral which eventually resulted in a treaty between Aman-ul-Malik, the Mehtar and the Maharaja. According to the treaty the Mehtar accepted the suzerainty of the Maharaja and in token thereof agreed to pay annually a small tribute. It was thus towards the end of the 19th century that the Jammu and Kashmir state came into shape, the Maharaja's authority extending from Chitral in the North to Kathua in the South and Aksai Chin in the East and Kohala in the West. The state thus became the most important region of India. Ranbir Singh was an excellent ruler, and a man of learning, culture and of sharp intelligence. The close of his reign was darkened by the calamitous famine of 1877-79, which decimated the Valley. On the death of Ranbir Singh, in 1885 his eldest son, Pratap Singh, ascended the throne. Maharaja Pratap Singh had a tough time with the British Indian Government.

In order to secure direct control over the state, British government appointed a resident who wielded unlimited powers over the administration. It was only towards the end of his long reign of forty years that some semblance of power was resorted to him. During his regime education was modernized. Several schools and two colleges – one in Srinagar and one in Jammu – were set up. Hospitals and dispensaries were opened. The Valley was linked with the rest of the country by two cart roads – one between Srinagar and Rawalpindi and another between Srinagar and Jammu. Thus, with the spread of education and faster communications between the state and the rest of India, there began a ferment among the people and they became conscious of their economic and political stagnation. In the early twenties of the century, this discontent surfaced with political demands voiced by a few leaders in the state. They were in no doubt influenced by the freedom movement launched by the Indian national Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. But the abortive agitation was ruthlessly suppressed by the Maharaja who, however, passed away in 1925.

During the reign of Maharaja Hari Singh, who succeeded his uncle Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1925, the political consciousness had dawned on the entire length and breadth of the

Subcontinent. The condition of the depressed classes was most pathetic. In order to ameliorate their conditions they started raising their voice against the ruler. As a result a continuous struggle for freedom and democratization of the administration in the state also started. It had its origin in the widespread discontentment among the Muslim masses that constituted 78% of the total population of the state and 94% of the population in the Kashmir Valley, but had very inadequate representation in the state services as well as in the economic and industrial life of the state. The bulk of the Muslim populations were tillers, labourers and artisans classes which were an excellent target of exploitation by the richer sections of the society. Agrarian discontent and paucity of employment opportunities were thus the motivation forces for the Muslim masses to agitate against the Dogra regime in the state. The process of presentation of demands and their half hearted consideration by the government continued for some years, but without any tangible results coming out of it. It was in 1930 that a new organization called the Reading Room Party was formed by a few Muslim graduates for discussing the problems of Muslim masses. Meanwhile Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, with post graduate degree in Chemistry from Muslim University Aligarh, and who was appointed as a teacher, left his job after a few months and in collaboration with his friends founded the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference of which he himself became President.

The party leadership demanded the establishment of a full responsible government in the state. The Maharaja, however could not make any headway towards grants of responsible government to the people of the state. The political and economic situation was deteriorating fast and it was not, therefore, difficult for Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah and his small band of devoted workers to launch a mass movement against the Maharaja's autocratic rule. This was met with forces – wholesale arrests, firing by the police and military and levy of punitive fines. But ultimately he had to yield and set up a legislative assembly with very limited legislative and executive powers. This did not satisfy the leaders. Because of Sheikh Abdullah's nationalist outlook, his desire to fight for the entire state's freedom and people's fundamental right and to get the cooperation of all the progressive forces in the state, the Muslim Conference was converted into National Conference in 1939. The National Conference adopted a programme of building up New Kashmir in 1944. Sheikh declared that the future and independence of India inextricably linked with the future and independence of Jammu and Kashmir State.

The struggle against Maharaja entered into a crucial stage when the famous Quit Kashmir movement for the transfer of power to the people was launched by the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference in May 1946. The state bureaucracy was bewildered at this new slogan and full of vengeance decided to crush the movement. In spite of reign of terror, arrest, prosecution and deaths, the movement was on the verge of success when the British rulers decided to partition British India by dividing Indian subcontinent into the new dominions of India and Pakistan in August 1947, and making all Princely states independent and advising the princess to accede to one or the new dominions, keeping in view the considerations of geographical contiguity. For most of the British Indian States, the choice before Jammu And Kashmir State was a difficult one because partition of India made Kashmir state geographically contiguous to both Bharat and Pakistan, besides Tibet, Sinkiang, USSAR and Afghanistan. Moreover, the state was a Muslim majority state with a Hindu ruler inclined towards India. A majority of the inhabitants of the state was Muslim by religion. Pakistan ruler thought that state must acceded to Pakistan.

The Maharaja therefore, could not decide the question of accession to either of the dominions rather entered into standstill agreement with Pakistan to get more time. Indian government however, refused to enter the agreement unless it was approved by the people of the state first. Mr. Jinnah was in a dilemma and believed that National Conference leadership was openly against his doctrine of two nations theory and looking more towards India, the people of the state would not accede to Pakistan. Pakistan authorities then used all sorts of tactics including communal incitement and infiltration of armed personnel to force the State accession to Pakistan but failed. Jinnah then became impatient and lost his balance as a result a massive attack in form of tribal invasion on defenceless Kashmir was launched on 25th October 1947 to force its annexation.

Meanwhile the working committee of the National Conference decided that the future of the state lay with India, approached the government of India for help and whole-heartedly supported the accession of the state by the Maharaja was thus forced to accede to India on 26th October 1947. On the October 27th 1947 the Maharaja had appointed the popular leader of the state Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah of the National Conference, Chief Emergence Officer. On 5th October, 1948 a regular government headed by Shiekh Mohammed Abdullah was formed. Article 370 out of Indian constitution, however, conferred a special status on the state of Jammu

and Kashmir and it was thus the only state of the Indian Union which got the right to frame its own constitution.

1.2.6 PRINCELY STATE AT THE LAPSE OF BRITISH PARAMOUNT

The Indian Independence Act, 1947 enacted by the British Parliament envisaged the creation of two Dominions, i.e., Dominion of India and Dominion of Pakistan. It had of necessity to recognize that with the surrender of imperial power, the Paramount of the British Crown over Indian States would lapse and with that lapse the Rulers of Indian States could become sovereign unto themselves. This gave the Rulers of the Indian States the option to decide the fate of their States. A State could accede to Indian or to Pakistan but failing to do either, it could claim the right to remain independent. Like other Indian States, these alternatives were also open to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian States thus, on the “appointed day”, i.e, 15TH August 1947 became legally independent and regained the position of absolute sovereignty which they had enjoyed prior to the assumption of suzerainty by the British Crown. This was in accordance with the Cabinet Mission’s Memorandum of 12th May 1946 and section 7(1) (b) of the Indian Independence Act, 1947. The status and the legal consequences which the transfer of power would entail were well-defined in the Cabinet Mission’s Memorandum of 12th May, 1946.

His Majesty’s Government will cease to exercise powers of paramountcy. This means that the rights of the states which flow from their relationship with the Crown, will no longer exist and that all the rights surrendered by the States to the paramount power will return to the States. Political arrangement between the States on one side, and the British Crown and British India, on the other will thus be brought to an end. The void will have to be filled either by the States entering into federal relationship with the successor Government in British India or falling this, entering into particular political arrangements with it for them. The Rulers of Indian princely States thus became unquestionably competent to acceded to either the Dominion of India or Pakistan in exercise of their sovereignty. Their joining had to be voluntary and at the time of joining they were under no obligation to accept any future Constitution to be adopted by either of the Dominion excepted by voluntary acceptance or supplementary agreement. Most of the Indian princely States acceded to Indian before 15th August, 1947 the deadline fixed for the accession of the States except, Jammu and Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagadh.

The developments unfolded from this stage had serious repercussions for the future state of Jammu and Kashmir. The state not only partitioned but also it has become one of the controversial issues in international politics and relations between India and Pakistan. The Instruments of Accession the Maharaja signed, when Pakistani rangers attacked the State, made it part of the Union of India but with a loss of significant part of its territory. How these developments took place and the nature of Instruments of Accession, the provisions incorporated in it will be discussed in the next lesson.

1.2.7 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson, you have studied the evolution of Jammu And Kashmir State over the period of time. The three parts that constitute the State – Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh – have come together into single entity very recently, only in 19th century under Maharaja Gulab Singh, the Dogra ruler of Jammu. In this lesson, you have studied how Gulab Singh rose from ordinary soldier to Maharaja and how significant are his skills in gaining the province of the Kashmir from the British after the defeat of the Sikh empire. Though the British had monitored the administration of the State under Dogra kingdom, however, various Maharaja's who succeeded Gulab Singh, more or less retain the authority over the state till the Quit Kashmir Movement emerged in the Kashmir Valley. The success of this democratic movement and the Pakistan's attack on the State in 1948 ultimately led to the end of monarchy and paved way for the emergence of democratic politics in the State of Jammu Kashmir which has become part of larger Indian Union after signing the Instruments of Accession in 1948.

1.2.8 EXERCISE

1. Write a detailed note on major landmarks in the evolution of the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. Write a short note on General Zorwar Singh's contribution expanding the princely State of Jammu.
3. How significant is the 'Treaty of Peace' signed in Amritsar in the constitution of princely State of Jammu and Kashmir?

1.3 ACCESSION OF J&K STATE TO INDIAN UNION: ROLE OF KING AND POPULAR LEADERSHIP

-V. Nagendra Rao & Tirtharaj Bhoi

STRUCTURE

1.3.0 Objectives

1.3.1 Introduction

1.3.2 The Pre-Independence Developments

1.3.3 Developments in Post-Independence Period

1.3.3.1 Standstill Agreement

1.3.4 Instrument of Accession

1.3.4.1 Salient Features of Instrument of Accession

1.3.5 Role of Popular Leadership in the Accession

1.3.6 Let Us Sum UP

1.3.7 Exercise

1.3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will study the developments that led to the accession of Jammu and Kashmir State in Indian Union. After going through this lesson, you will be able to know:

- the importance of Cabinet Mission in determining the status of princely states in Indian Subcontinent with the end of British Paramountasy;
- the invasion of Pakistani raiders on Kashmir and accession of Jammu and Kashmir State to Indian Union;
- the developments that led to the end of monarchy and arrival of democratic politics in the state.

1.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Instrument of Accession is a legal document executed by Maharaja Hari Singh, ruler of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, on 26 October 1947. By executing this document under the provisions of the Indian Independence Act 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh agreed to accede to the Dominion of India. In a letter sent to Maharaja Hari Singh on 27 October 1947, the then Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten accepted the accession. However, the Accession was not as smooth as you have studied here. There is a lot much happened from the day India became Independent and the State of Jammu and Kashmir accessed to India. There are five major parties that shaped the course of action or developments which ultimately led to the accession. The Domain of India, the Domain of Pakistan, the British, the Maharaja of Jammu and the Democratic Movement under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah all are active players in the events unfolded. How these developments took place and how it led to the Accession of the Jammu and Kashmir to India will be the major focus of the present lesson.

1.3.2 THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE DEVELOPMENTS

The Cabinet Mission was an important milestone in the developments of the Indian Subcontinent in 1940s. Although the Cabinet Mission plan was rejected, the recommendations for the future of the 565 princely states, covering over two-fifths of the subcontinent, with a population of 99 million, became the basis for their future settlement. In a 'Memorandum on States' Treaties and Paramountcy' it was stated that the paramountcy which the princely states had enjoyed with the British Crown would lapse at independence because the existing treaty relations could not be transferred to any successor. The 'void' which would be created would have to be filled, either by a federal relationship or by 'particular political arrangements' with the successor government or governments, whereby the states would accede to one or other dominion.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir had unique features not shared by other princely states. Ruled by a Hindu, with its large Muslim majority, it was geographically contiguous to both India and the future Pakistan. Lord Mountbatten visited Kashmir in June, 1947 and spent three days there. He had with him a long note prepared by Nehru, which, on the basis of Sheikh Abdullah's popularity in the Kashmir valley, made out a strong case for the state's accession to India: "Of all the people's movements in the various States in India, the Kashmir National Conference was far

the most widespread and popular . . . It is true that Sheikh Abdullah's long absence in prison has produced a certain confusion in people's minds as to what they should do. The National Conference has stood for and still stands for Kashmir joining the Constituent Assembly of India". Mountbatten also advised Maharaja "not to make a declaration of independence, but to join one dominion or the other by the 14th August, after finding out the will of the people". He also brought the message from the Congress leaders that, if the Maharaja were to decide in favour of Pakistan because of his Muslim majority population, they would not take it 'amiss'. But the Maharaja tactfully avoided to meet him under an excuse of ill health on the last day of his visit when the final reply was to be given to him.

1.3.3 DEVELOPMENTS IN POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

On August 15, thus, India and Pakistan emerged as two independent dominions. Maharaja of Kashmir was caught on the horns of dilemma whether to accede to Indian Dominion or to Pakistan or to declare Kashmir as an independent State. Like some of the other Princes, he too, being carried away by sentimentalism rather than realism and supported by his advisors and even some of the leaders of the politically conscious groups in the state, fondled with the idea of independence.

1.3.3.1 Standstill Agreement

In order to get more time for the final decision of the state's accession, Maharaja offered a Standstill Agreement to both the dominions. Pakistan agreed to it hurriedly whereas the Government of India wanted concurrence of the people of the state. Despite signing of the standstill agreement with Pakistan, political manoeuvring was taking place on all sides. Both India and Pakistan were actively trying to determine events so that Kashmir would accede to their respective Dominions. India retained the upper hand and despite the Maharaja's dislike for Nehru, he communicated more regularly and amicably with the Indian leaders than with those in Pakistan. Although he had rejected Mountbatten's suggestion of retaining military links with either India or Pakistan, on 13 September 2047 he requested the Government of India for the loan of an Indian army officer to replace Major-General Scott as his commander-in-chief. Clear steps were being taken to improve communications with India, by telegraph, telephone, wireless

and roads. The Pakistani government alleged that India had violated the standstill agreement, because they had included Kashmir within the Indian postal system.

The Indian leaders were equally anxious about Pakistan moves. The armed raids from Pakistani territory into the state and disturbances in Poonch led the Indian leadership to believe that there would be a full-scale Pakistani incursion. Nehru wrote to Patel on 27 September that the maharaja should 'make friends' with the National Conference, 'so that there might be this popular support against Pakistan'. Nehru had hoped that the maharaja could be persuaded to accede to India before any invasion took place and he realized that accession would only be more easily accepted if Abdullah, as a popular leader, were brought into the picture. Two days after this letter, on 29 September, Abdullah, who had been in prison since his Quit Kashmir Movement in 1946, was released from jail. Abdullah wrote a letter pledging allegiance to the maharaja. At the beginning of October Dwarakanath Kachru, the secretary of the All-India States Peoples' Conference, visited Srinagar with the objective of convincing Abdullah of the merits of joining India. He reported back to Nehru that Sheikh Abdullah and his close associates have decided for the Indian Union. The objective of the Kashmir National Conference, as stated by Abdullah, is the attainment of people's sovereignty with the Maharaja enjoying a constitutional position.

Sensing the possibility of losing the State of Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan sent raiders from the tribal territory of Pakistan's North-West Frontier province to Kashmir Valley. The invaders indulged in indiscriminate plunder, massacres, burning of houses, raping and abducting women. While explaining the invasion on Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah said, 'What happened in Kashmir adds altogether a new pattern of perfidy. Those tribal pathans equipped with mechanized weapons of war, swooped down on us, not merely as armed bandits but as a centrally directed force with the avowed object of subjugating our land to the vassalage of Pakistan at the point of the gun'.

The invasion of tribals from Pakistan compelled the Maharaja of Kashmir to approach the Indian Government for immediate military assistance. The Indian leadership on the other hand insisted that unless the popular government in Kashmir be established and Instrument of Accession of the state of the Indian Dominion be signed, military assistance could not be sent.

In these compelling circumstances the Maharaja by a letter dated October 26, 1947 to the Governor-General of India informed him that he had decided to accede to India and enclosed an Instrument of Accession with it. The Government of India accepted the request of the Maharaja and the Instrument of Accession was signed on October 27, 1947 and military help was dispatched to save Kashmir and its people from the barbaric invasion of tribesmen. Sheikh Abdullah pointed out that both the Maharaja and the people of Kashmir requested the Government of India to accept accession. Pakistan, therefore, had no right to say “that we must do this and that we must do that”.

After accepting the Instrument of Accession, Lord Mountbatten wrote following personal letter to Maharaja:

“... my Govt. have decided to accept the accession of Kashmir State to the Dominion of India. In consistence with their policy that in the case of any state where the issue of accession has been the subject of dispute, the question of accession should be decided in accordance with the wishes of the people of the state; it is my government’s wish that as soon as law and orders have been restored in Kashmir and its soil cleared by the invader, the question of State’s accession should be settled by a reference to the people”.

However, A.S.Anand, former Chief Justice, Supreme Court of India is of the view that: “This statement does not and cannot affect the legality of accession which was sealed by India’s official acceptance. This statement is not a part of the Instrument of Accession”. Mehar Chand Mahajan, another Chief justice of Supreme Court India observed that “The Indian Independence Act did not envisage conditional accession. It could not envisage such a situation, as it would be outside the parliament’s policy. It wanted to keep no Indian state in a state of suspense. It conferred on the rulers of the Indian state absolute power in their discretion to accede to either of the two Dominions. The Dominion Governor-General had the power to accept the accession or reject the offer. But he had no power to keep the question open or attach conditions to it”.

The only documents relevant to the accession were the Instrument of Accession and the Indian Independence Act and as the constitutional documents did not contemplate any conditions, there can be no question of the accession have been conditional. Mahajan further pointed out that “Finality which is statutory cannot be made contingent on conditions imposed

outside the powers of the statute. Any rider which militates against the Finality is clearly ultra virus and has to be rejected”.

Once Instrument of Accession was signed, accepting the legitimate demand of his people to establish a responsible Government in the State, Maharaja appointed Sheikh Abdullah as the Head of Emergency Administration the very next day. Some of the political parties of Jammu, particularly those representing Hindus, were in favour of full and final accession of the state to the Indian Union. They were of the view that issue of accession should not be linked with the promise of plebiscite at a future date. This stand of the parties continued in the subsequent years. But the Muslim Conference and other Islamic parties/groups of the Valley, on the other hand, contested State's accession to India. These parties took the stand that issue of accession was still alive and it could only be decided by the people of J&K through the exercise of right of self-determination in the plebiscite. They believed that accession of the State to India is temporary and as such, subject to the ratification by the people. They are also of the view that people of Kashmir still retain the right of self-determination. They believed that the only solution to the Kashmir issue was to hold a plebiscite. The people of the state should have the right to decide their future themselves.

Once appointed as Head of Emergency Administration, Sheikh Abdullah raised a force of local Kashmiri volunteers to patrol Srinagar and take control of administration. The Indian troops, which were air lifted in the early hours of 27 October, secured the Srinagar airport. The city of Srinagar was being patrolled by the National Conference volunteers with Hindus and Sikhs moving about freely among Muslims, an “incredible sight” to visiting journalists. The National Conference also worked with the Indian Army to secure the city.

Pakistan refused to recognise the accession of Kashmir to India, claiming that it was obtained by "fraud and violence." Governor General Mohammad Ali Jinnah ordered its Army Chief General Douglas Gracey to move Pakistani troops to Kashmir at once. However, the Indian and Pakistani forces were still under a joint command, and Field Marshal Auchinleck prevailed upon him to withdraw the order. With its accession to India, Kashmir became legally Indian territory, and the British officers could not play any role in an inter-Dominion war. The Pakistan army made available arms, ammunition and supplies to the rebel forces who were dubbed the 'Azad Army'. Pakistani army officers 'conveniently' on leave and the former officers

of the Indian National Army were recruited to command the forces. In May 1948, the Pakistani army officially entered the conflict, in theory to defend the Pakistan borders, but it made plans to push towards Jammu and cut the lines of communications of the Indian forces in the Mehndar Valley. In Gilgit, the force of Gilgit Scouts under the command of a British officer Major William Brown mutinied and overthrew the governor Ghansara Singh. Brown prevailed on the forces to declare accession to Pakistan. They are also believed to have received assistance from the Chitral Scouts of the state of Chitral, one of the princely states of Pakistan, which had acceded to Pakistan on 6 October 1947.

The ceasefire was finally imposed on 1 January 1949, signed by General Gracey on behalf of Pakistan and General Roy Bucher, who was shortly to hand over to General Cariappa, on behalf of India. It was the last document signed by two Englishmen on behalf of the respective Dominions. The line was to be monitored by a United Nations Military Observer Group (UNMOGIP).

1.3.4 INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION

The Instrument of Accession, which formed the basis of Jammu and Kashmir's future relationship with India, accorded the State a special status which was not granted to other former princely states. Legally, India's jurisdiction only extended to external affairs, defence and communications.

1.3.4.1 Salient Feature of Instrument of Accession

The first thing to be noted is that the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh on the 26th October, 1947, was in the same form¹ as was executed by the Rulers of the numerous other States which had acceded to India following the enactment of the Indian Independence Act, 1947. The legal consequences of the execution of the Instrument of Accession by the Ruler of Jammu & Kashmir cannot, accordingly, be in any way different from those arising from the same fact in the case of the other Indian States. It may be recalled that owing to the lapse of paramountcy under s. 7(1)(b) of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, the Indian States regained the position of absolute sovereignty which they had enjoyed prior to the assumption of suzerainty by the British Crown.

The Rulers of the Indian States thus became unquestionably competent to accede to either of the newly created Dominions of India and Pakistan, in exercise of their sovereignty. The legal basis as well as the form of Accession were the same in the case of those States which acceded to Pakistan and those which acceded to India. There is, therefore, no doubt that by the act of Accession the State of Jammu & Kashmir became legally and irrevocably a part of the territory of India and that the Government of India was entitled to exercise jurisdiction over the State with respect to those matters to which the Instrument of Accession extended. If, in spite of this, the Government of India had given an assurance to the effect that the Accession or the constitutional relationship between India and the State would be subject to confirmation by the people of the State, under no circumstances can any third party take advantage of such extra-legal assurances and claim that the legal act had not been completed.

The act of Accession was unequivocally given legal effect by declaring Jammu & Kashmir a part of the territory of India [Art. 1]. But the application of the other provisions of the Constitution of India to Jammu & Kashmir was placed on a tentative basis, subject to the eventual approval of the Constituent Assembly of the State. The Constitution thus provided that the only Articles of the Constitution which would apply of their own force to Jammu & Kashmir were—Arts. 1 and 370. The application of the other Articles was to be determined by the President in consultation with the Government of the State [Art. 370]. The legislative authority of Parliament over the State, again, would be confined to those items of the Union and Concurrent lists as correspond to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession. The above interim arrangement would continue until the Constituent Assembly for Jammu & Kashmir made its decision. It would then communicate its recommendations to the President, who would either abrogate Art. 370 or make such modification as might be recommended by that Constituent Assembly.

In pursuance of the above provisions of the Constitution, the President made the Constitution (Application to Jammu & Kashmir) Order, 1950, in consultation with the Government of the State of Jammu & Kashmir, specifying the matters with respect to which the Union Parliament would be competent to make laws for Jammu & Kashmir, relating to the three subjects of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications with respect to which Jammu & Kashmir had acceded to India.

1.3.5 ROLE OF POPULAR LEADERSHIP IN THE ACCESSION

The path-breaking event of transformation of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference into the National Conference gave a new dimension to Jammu and Kashmir politics in 1939. The decision was taken by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah after realising the change in the rules of the game. Nehru had a very cordial relationship with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. They shared close ideological proximity with each other. Nehru's Kashmir mission required the identification of a regional figure, modern, secular and rooted in the local social milieu. He found in Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah a leader drawn from the plebian section of the Kashmir society who identified with the people and had an open mind on issues central to the Kashmir society and polity.

Nehru was a staunch supporter of the popular legitimacy of any political rule. It was this consideration which led him to rein in the political designs of the then ruler of the Jammu and Kashmir state, Maharaja Hari Singh. Nehru offered his full cooperation to the National Conference in the 'Quit Kashmir' movement in 1946. He tried to enter Kashmir but was arrested by the Maharaja and sent back. Nehru arranged a lawyer, Asaf Ali, to defend Sheikh Abdullah in one of the cases with regard to the Maharaja's rule in the state.

He also helped the National Conference by putting in use the ideological resources which the latter needed for freedom from the rule of the Maharaja. The New Kashmir Document, which was framed by the National Conference in 1944, can be cited as an example. Almost all the political, economic and social values which Nehru adhered to came to be included in this document. Though the manifesto was essentially a product of local socio-economic realities, the Naya Kashmir Manifesto was basically a roadmap for the political and economic development of the J&K state. Its essence was redistributive justice which forms the bedrock of socialistic thinking. This document structured itself on the basic values of planning. All these values were very dear to Jawaharlal Nehru.

There were some important elements which formed the core of the common ideological project on Kashmir propounded by Nehru and the National Conference under the leadership of Shiekh Mohammad Abdullah. One was that a joint struggle of different communities, castes and religious groups, oppressed by autocratic rule, can lay down the basis for an emancipatory political movement in Jammu and Kashmir. Second, both political organisations, the National

Conference and Indian National Congress under Nehru, worked towards consolidating Kashmiri nationalism as an affiliate of pan-Indian nationalism to checkmate the influence of the two-nation theory on the political culture of the Jammu and Kashmir state.

When the tribal invasion took place in October 1947, the Maharaja of Kashmir acceded to the Indian Union of course with due support of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. After the Instrument of Accession, Maharaja Hari Singh appointed Sheikh Abdullah as the head of the Emergency Administration on October 31, 1947. Maharaja Hari Singh invited Sheikh Abdullah to form the Interim Government and to carry on the administration of the State. The Interim Government later changed into a full-fledged Cabinet on March 5, 1948 with Sheikh Abdullah as its head. The appointment of Sheikh Abdullah as a new Prime Minister of the State was a clear manifestation of the establishment of a popular government in the State.

After Maharaja Hari Singh acceded to India on 26th Oct 1947, the Indian Government was under tremendous international pressure to implement the UN Security Council resolutions passed on 21st April 1948 and 13th August 1948, which directed both India and Pakistan to resolve Kashmir dispute through impartial plebiscite. Sheikh Abdullah opposed the UN resolution during his historical speech in UN Security Council on 5th February 1948, where he said, “if Pakistan comes forward and says, we question the legality of Accession, I am prepared to discuss... We shall prove before the Security Council that Kashmir and the people of Kashmir have lawfully and constitutionally acceded to the Dominion of India, and Pakistan has no right to question that Accession”. Again in 1950 when UN nominated Sir Owen Dixon, an Australian jurist, as the United Nations representative recommended ‘Regional Plebiscite in Jammu & Kashmir’, National Conference was the first to reject it in its General Council meeting on 27th Oct 1950. Sheikh decided to convene a Constituent Assembly to ratify the Accession of Jammu & Kashmir State with India and on 5th November 1951. The Constituent Assembly framed a new Constitution for a democratic Jammu and Kashmir State with Indian Union, the details of which we study in the next lesson.

1.3.6 LET US SUM UP

Maharaja Hari Singh became the ruler of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1925, and he was the reigning monarch at the conclusion of the British rule in the subcontinent in 1947.

With the impending independence of India, the British announced that the British Paramountcy over the princely states would end, and the states were free to choose between the new Dominions of India and Pakistan or to remain independent. When Pakistan supported raiders invaded the Kashmir, the Maharaja initially fought back but appealed for assistance to the Governor-General Louis Mountbatten, who agreed on the condition that the ruler accede to India. Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession on 26 October 1947 in return for military aid and assistance, which was accepted by the Governor General. While the Government of India accepted the accession, it insisted the Maharaja to accede power to popular government led by Sheikh Abdullah who was championing the democratic movement in Jammu and Kashmir. Accordingly Sheikh Abdullah was appointed as Head of the Emergency Administration which has successfully countered the Pakistani attack. The Maharaja subsequently appointed Abdullah as head of the interim government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir which was entrusted to frame a new Constitution as per the changing status as part of Indian Union. According a new Constituent Assembly was established to undertake the task.

1.3.7 EXERCISE

1. Analyse the factors that forced the Maharaja to sign the Instrument of Accession.
2. Write a short note on Standstill agreement.
3. Outline the developments that led Maharaja to accede the State of Jammu and Kashmir to Indian Union.
4. Explain the salient features of Instrument of Accession.
5. Critically analyse the role of popular leadership in the Accession.

1.4 FORMATION OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND FRAMING OF STATE CONSTITUTION

-Tirtharaj Bhoi

STRUCTURE

- 1.4.0 Objectives**
- 1.4.1 Introduction**
- 1.4.2 Formation of Constituent Assembly**
- 1.4.3 The Constitution Order 1950**
- 1.4.4 Convening the Constituent Assembly**
 - 1.4.4.1 Proceedings of Constituent Assembly
- 1.4.5 Delhi Agreement of July 1952**
- 1.4.6 Constituent Assembly: Post-Agreement Developments**
- 1.4.7 Latest Development: Application of Indian Constitution**
- 1.4.8 Let Us Sum UP**
- 1.4.9 Exercise**

1.4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will understand the special status accorded to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, formation of Constituent Assembly and framing of the separate Constitution for the State. After going through this lesson, you will be able to know:

- the bases for the special status given to the State of Jammu and Kashmir;
- the importance of Article 370 in Constitution of India;
- formation of Constituent Assembly and the adoption of new Constitution; and
- the importance of Delhi Agreement of 1952.

1.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir is the legal document which establishes the framework of government at state level in Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. The present constitution was adopted on 17 November 1956, and came into effect on January 26, 1957. Constitution of India grants special status to Jammu and Kashmir among Indian states, and it is the only state in India to have a separate constitution. Article 370 of the Constitution of India states that Parliament of India and the Union Government jurisdiction extends over limited matters with respect to State of Jammu & Kashmir, and in all other matters not specifically vested in Federal governments, actions have to be supported by state legislature. Also, unlike other states, residual powers are vested in state government. Because of these constitutional provisions, the State of Jammu & Kashmir enjoys autonomy not enjoyed by other states. Among notable and visible differences with other states, till 1965, the head of state in Jammu & Kashmir was called as Sadr-e-Riyasat, whereas in other state, the title was Governor, and head of government was named as Prime Minister in place of Chief Minister in other states.

1.4.2 FORMATION OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

On the commencement of the Indian constitution, the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1950 was promulgated by the President of India. This order defined the jurisdiction of Parliament and the provisions of the constitution of India which were made applicable to the state in furtherance of the subjects specified in the Instrument of Accession. The Centre-State relation were governed by this Order and for its internal governance, the State was governed by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution Act of 1939, which remained operative till 26th January 1957 when the State Constitution was brought into force. During the interim period the State framed its own constitution by convening a Constituent Assembly of its own. The Constituent Assembly took certain important decisions and recommended that no compensation should be paid for the expropriation of big landed estates; the hereditary ruler ship should be abolished and that the future headship of the state should be made elective and that the state should have its own flag.

These decisions of the State Constituent Assembly had to be recognized by the Government of India and consequently required amendments in the Constitution of India, i.e.,

article 370 and the constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order 1950. These developments led to the Delhi Agreement of July, 1952. The understanding and the conclusion contained in the Delhi Agreement were given a formal shape of a Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1950 and it now regulates the constitutional relationship between the State of Jammu and Kashmir and Union of India.

1.4.3 THE CONSTITUTION (APPLICATION TO JAMMU AND KASHMIR) ORDER, 1950

Under article 370(1)(b)(i), the constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1950 was promulgated by the President of India in consultation with the Government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir on 26th January, 1950. This order defined the jurisdiction of the Parliament and the provisions of the Constitution of India which were made applicable to the state in furtherance of the subjects already specified in the Instrument of Accession. Two Schedules were added to the order. In the First Schedule the matters corresponding to the Instrument of Accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to the Dominion of India with respect to which the Union of Parliament was competent to make laws were specified. The First Schedule enumerated the approximate entries from the Union List of Seventh Schedule which were made applicable to the State. These entries related to defences, foreign affairs, communication, trade and commerce with foreign countries, matters relating to Parliament, Union Executive and Supreme Court, audit of the accounts of the Union and ancillary matters. Some of these entries applied in the modified form, such as those relating to railways, trade and commerce, and audit.

Besides articles 370 which apply to the State propriety vigour, the other provisions of the Constitution of India made applicable in relation to the state were those specified in the second schedule to this order. The provisions of the second schedule were applied subjects to the exception and modifications specified in the said schedule. Parts of the Constitution that were made applicable or not-applicable to the State are as follows:

- (i) The fundamental rights and directive principles did not apply to Jammu and Kashmir;
- (ii) The jurisdiction of Supreme Court was restricted to original and appellate jurisdiction under articles 131 and 132;

- (iii) The Comptroller and Auditor-General had no jurisdiction in relation to Jammu and Kashmir;
- (iv) Representatives of the state in the Council of States and House of the People were to be chosen by the president in consultation with the state government;
- (v) The legislative relations between Jammu and Kashmir and India were restricted to matters indicated in the First Schedule of this Order. Residuary power legislation vested in the state as the articles 247 to 252 did not apply to the state;
- (vi) The financial provisions of the Constitution did not apply to the state;
- (vii) Provisions with regard to services did not apply to the state ;
- (viii) Provisions relating to elections were to apply only in relation to the elections to the parliament and to the offices of the president and Vice-President of India;
- (ix) Emergency provisions did not apply to the state;
- (x) Amendments made in the Constitution of India would apply to Jammu and Kashmir subject to an appropriate order issued by the President under article 370(1).

The constitution order of 1950, thus envisaged a unique pattern of constitutional relationship between the state of Jammu and Kashmir and Indian Union. It contained a purely federal pattern as the state had acceded only in specified subjects. The State List and the Concurrent List in the Seventh Schedule did not apply to the state. The residuary powers of legislation remained with state. The state had also the right to frame its constitution and provide for its institutions. In other words, the provisions governing the Executive, Legislation, and Judiciary of the state of Jammu and Kashmir were to be found in the constitution drawn by the constituent Assembly of the state and the corresponding provisions of the constituent Assembly for the state was to be set up as envisaged in the provisions of articles 370.

1.4.4 CONVENING OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FOR THE STATE

As seen above the jurisdiction of the Union Parliament to legislate with respect to the state was confined to the matters surrendered to the centre in terms of Instruments of Accession. The remaining matters were left for the state to decide in its own constitution. Article 370, had therefore, rightly envisaged Constituent Assembly for the state. The demand for the National

Assembly for the state of Jammu and Kashmir was made during the freedom movement in the state and the “New Kashmir” programme envisaged the same. The perception for the National Assembly was so well recognized that the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir in the Declaration of 5th March, 1948 proclaimed as under:-

“I have already appointed the popular leader of my people Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah as the Head of the Emergency Administration. It is now my desire to replace the emergency administration by a popular interim government and to provide for its powers, duties and functions, pending the formation of a fully democratic constitution.

My council of Ministers shall take appropriate steps as soon as restoration of normal conditions have been completed to convene a national Assembly based upon adult suffrage, having due regard to the principle that number of representatives from each voting areas should, as far as practicable, be proportionate to population of the area. The Constitution to be framed by the National Assembly shall provide adequate safeguards for the minorities and contain appropriate provisions guaranteeing freedom of conscience, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah assisted by a Cabinet was entrusted the task of running the administration of the popular interim government. The Maharaja’s authority was limited to that of a constitutional ruler, making it imperative upon him to consult the government on all issues relating to the governance of the state. The Maharaja could not reconcile himself to the democratic system of the government and there was disagreement between him and the government on matters of policy. He dissociated himself from the administration and before leaving the state he issued a proclamation on 20th June 1949 appointed his son Karan Singh as Regent in whom vested all the powers and functions legislative, executive, or judicial which were exercisable by the Maharaja in relation to the state and its government including the power and prerogative of making laws issuing proclamations orders and Ordinances, etc. Karan Singh thus became the head of the state.

Karan Singh as a constitutional Head of the state issued a proclamation on 1st May, 1951 for the convening of the Constituent Assembly for the state of Jammu and Kashmir to decide the

future constitution of the state. The Proclamation directed that the Constituent Assembly consisting of representatives of people elected on the basis of adult franchise shall be constituted to frame the constitution for the state. The voting at the elections was direct and by secret ballot. Only a state Subject who was not less than 21 years of age on the first day of March, 1951 and who had been resident in the constituency for such period as was prescribed by the rules could be registered as a voter in the electoral rolls for that constituency.

The elections to the Constituent Assembly were held in terms of the proclamation in September, 1951 and it composed of 75 members. It held its first meeting on 31st October, 1951 at Srinagar. The Constituent Assembly was invested with the authority of a constituent body. It was a sovereign authority in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was given authority not only to frame the Constitution for Jammu and Kashmir, but to give concurrence in matters of application of Indian constitution and extension of the jurisdiction of the Indian Parliament to Jammu and Kashmir. The further progress in the development of constitutional relations between Jammu and Kashmir and India was subject to the recommendations of the Constituent Assembly.

1.4.4.1 Proceedings of the Constituent Assembly

As seen above, the Constituent Assembly for the state as contemplated under article 370 was elected on the basis of adult suffrage in September 1951. The Constituent Assembly held its first meeting on 31st October, 1951 at Srinagar. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the then Prime Minister of the State in his opening address to the State Constituent Assembly on 5th November, 1951 set the following four tasks before it for deliberation:

- (a) To frame a constitution for the future governance of the state of Jammu and Kashmir;
- (b) To determine the future of Royal Dynasty of Jammu and Kashmir;
- (c) To determine whether any compensation should be paid for the expropriation of the big landed estates in pursuance of the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act, 1950: and
- (d) To declare its reasoned conclusion regarding accession.

Between 31st October, 1951 and 9th August 1953 (when Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was removed from the Prime Minister ship of the state) the constituent assembly held only six

sessions and could not contribute much towards the framing of the state's constitution. However during this period constituent assembly took the decisions on the following:-

- (i) That no compensation should be paid for the expropriation of big landed estates. This was done by adopting the report of the Land Compensation Committee (29-31st March, 1952).
- (ii) That hereditary ruler ship should be abolished and that the future headship of the state should be made elective,
- (iii) That the state should have its own flag (7th June, 1952).

These decisions of the state Constituent Assembly had to be recognized by the Government of India and consequently required necessary amendment in the Constitution of India i.e. article 370 and the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order 1950. The leaders of Jammu and Kashmir including Sheikh Mohammed Abdulla visited Delhi in July, 1952. After a week long negotiations with Indian leaders concluded an agreement known as Delhi Agreement of July, 1952

1.4.5 DELHI AGREEMENT OF JULY 1952

The terms of the agreement were explained to the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir by Sheikh Abdulla, the Prime Minister of the state on August 11, 1952. The Delhi Agreement covered broadly ten points which are as under:

- 1) **Residuary powers:** It was agreed that while under the present Indian Constitution the residuary powers vested with the Centre in respected of all states, in case of Jammu and Kashmir, they vested in the state itself and should continue as such.
- 2) **Citizenship:** It was agreed that in accordance with article 5 of the Indian Constitution persons who have domicile in the Jammu and Kashmir state shall be the citizens of India. It was further agreed that the state legislature shall have power to define and regulate the rights and privileges of the permanent residents of the state, more especially in regard to the acquisition of the immoveable property, appointments to services and like matters. Till then the existing state law would apply. It was also agreed that special provisions should be made in the laws governing citizenship to provide for the return of

those permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir state who went to Pakistan in connection with disturbances of 1947 or in fear of them as well as of those who have left for Pakistan earlier but could not return. They should be entitled to the rights, privileges and obligations of citizenship.

- 3) **Fundamental Rights:** It was agreed that the Fundamental Rights which are contained in the Constitution of India could not be conferred on the residents of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in their entirety because of the different political situation in the state and because of the socio-economic policies of the state Government under the new Kashmir programme. It was agreed that there was a need for providing suitable modifications, amendments and exceptions, as the case may be in the chapter of fundamental rights in order to harmonize those provisions with the pattern of principles of new Kashmir program. However, the main point that remained to be determined was whether the chapter of fundamental rights should form the part of the constitution of J&K or that of Union constitution. Since fundamental rights were not applicable, an Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights and Citizenship was constituted on 7 November 1951 to make recommendations as regards the qualifications necessary for the state citizenship and fundamental rights of the state. In making recommendations, the Committee shall keep in view the definition of the 'State subject' proclaimed on 20th April, 1927. The same date has been fixed to determine who is a citizen of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.
- 4) **Jurisdiction of Supreme Court:** The Constituent Assembly also decided the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of India. It has given original jurisdiction in respect of disputes mentioned in Article 131 of the Constitution of India. The appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in civil and criminal matters was not agreed to. It was further agreed that the Supreme Court should have jurisdiction in regard to fundamental rights which are agreed to by the state.
- 5) **National Flag:** For historical and other reasons connected with the freedom struggle in the, the need for the continuance of the state Flag was recognized. It was agreed that the Union Flag to which all owed allegiance as part of the Union will occupy the supremely distinctive place in the State.

- 6) **President of India:** It was agreed that powers to grant reprieve and commute death sentence, etc., should also belong to the President of Union.
- 7) **Headship of the State:** The following arrangement was mutually agreed upon in this regard:- i) the head of the state shall be the person recognized by the President of the Union on the recommendation of the Legislature of the State; ii) he shall hold office during the pleasure of president; iii) he may, writing under his hand-addressed to the President, resign his office; iv) subject to the foregoing provisions, the Head of the State shall hold office for the term of five years from the date he enters upon his office.
- 8) **Financial Integration:** It was recognized that it would be necessary to evolve some sort of financial arrangement between the state and the Union. In view of the far reaching consequences involved therein, it was agreed that a detailed and objective examination of this subject would be necessary.
- 9) **Emergency Powers:** It was decided that article 352 be accepted with the addition of following words at the end of first paragraph: - “But in regard to internal disturbance at the request or with the concurrence of the Government of the State”. The Government of India did not press for application of article 356 or even article 360. The State’s representatives wanted sometimes to consider the implications and consequences as laid down in articles 353, 358, and 359 which was on the whole accepted. In regard to article 354, they wanted to examine it further before expressing their opinion.
- 10) **Conduct of Election to the Houses of Parliament:** Article 324 of the Indian Constitution was already applicable so far as it related to the election to the Houses of Parliament and to the offices of the President and Vice – President of India.

Commending these decisions to the Constituent Assembly, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah made the following observation:

“A satisfactory position has emerged and we are now able to assess the basic issues of our constitutional relationship with India in clearer terms. These have been a good deal of accommodation of our respective points of view. Both, the representatives of the Government of India and the Kashmir Delegation have been impelled by the desire to strength the future existing relationship to remove all obscurity and vagueness. We are

convinced, as ever before, that we have the full support of the Government and the people of the India in the fulfilment of our democratic ideals and the realization of our objectives.”

Sheikh Abdullah further stated:

“The goodwill and amity, I am sure, will result in the consolidated of freedom and democracy in our country. I may, however, emphasized that the freedom and democracy in our relationship with India is the identity of the democratic and secular aspiration, which have guided the people of India as well as those of Jammu and Kashmir in their struggle for emancipation and before which all constitutional safeguards will take a secondary position....It is of course, for the Constituent Assembly which is seized of these matters to determine the extent and scope of the State’s accession to India. The Assembly may agree to continue this relationship on the present basis or extend its scope as it might like and consider feasible and proper in the course of framing the constitution for the State.”

The Delhi Agreement was considered by the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir between 11th August and 19th August, 1952, and a motion approving the agreement was unanimously adopted. The Indian Prime Minister also gave the details of the terms of the agreement in a statement made in the Lok Sabah on 24th July, 1952. This statement was discussed in the Lok Sabah on 7th August, 1952 and although some members criticized such aspects of the agreement as special rights for permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir and elective Headship of the State, the House adopted a motion approving all the steps taken so far in the matter. The implementation of these mutual pledges was the bottom line and the high ideal before the State Autonomy Committee.

1.4.6 CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY: POST-AGREEMENT DEVELOPMENTS

However, the political developments in Jammu and Kashmir have taken a surprising new turn from here onwards. Sheikh Abdullah, the Head of the State, has become doubtful about Indian Government’s commitment for special status and autonomy as more and more nationalist leaders from India and Jammu started criticizing special status. A protest movement was launched by Shyam Prasad Mukherjee. These developments made Sheikh Abdullah more assertive and

started taking decisions without consulting either Central government or his own colleagues in the state, which has led to growth of dissent within the ranks of the National Conference.

After the dismissal of the Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah the Prime Minister of the state on 8th August 1953 and his imprisonment simultaneously, a liberal group headed by Bahshi Ghulam Mohammad as its leader assumed the leadership of the Government as also of the a Constituent Assembly of the State. A new phase of constitutional relationship between the State and India thus commenced. The Constituent Assembly started its work afresh. The process of constitution making was expedited. Two committees were set up, namely, Fundamental Rights Committee and Drafting Committee to finalize the draft Constitution. The Constituent Assembly met on February 6, 1954, and adopted the reports of Basic Principles Committee and Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights thereby fulfilling one of the major tasks, i.e. accession of the State to India with which it has been charged. The report of Basic Principles Committee laid emphasize on the following:

“The State’s accession to the Union entails certain responsibilities on the centre for protecting the interests of the State and also for its social and economic development. In order to enable the Centre to discharge its responsibilities which devolve upon it under the Constitution, those provisions of the Constitution of India which may be necessary for this purpose should be made applicable to the State in an appropriate manner. While preserving the internal autonomy of the State, all the obligations which flow from the fact of accession and also its elaborations as contained in the Delhi Agreement should find an appropriate place in the Constitution, The Committee is of the opinion that it is high time that finality in this respect should be reached and the relationship of the State with the Union should be expressed in clear and precise terms”.

The Basic Principles Committee also recommended that a directive be issued to the Drafting Committee of the constitution to further define the sphere of Union jurisdiction in the State suggesting additions, modifications and amendments in the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1950 to suit the requirements of the State. The Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights and Citizenship recommended to the Drafting Committee that the Fundamental Rights of the Indian Constitution should be made applicable to Jammu and

Kashmir with suitable modifications. The Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir unanimously adopted the Reports of the Basic Principles Committee and Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights and Citizenship on 6th February, 1954. These Reports were presented jointly to the Constituent Assembly.

Syed Mir Qasim presented to the Constituent Assembly the report of the Drafting Committee on 11th February, 1954. The Annexure to the Report indicated “in detail provisions of the Constitution of India which generally correspond to Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications and such other matters as are considered essential concomitants of the fact of accession”. The Report was unanimously adopted by the Constituents Assembly on 15th February, 1954 and proposals contained therein were submitted to Government of India through the state Government for further appropriate action. The Drafting Committee in its Report defined nature and extent of the jurisdiction of the Indian Union in the State of the Jammu and Kashmir.

The Government of India took cognizance of the proposals sent to it by the State Government which had been duly adopted by the Constituent Assembly of the State. These proposals were made a part of the Constitution by an order issued by the President in exercise of his powers under article 370(1) and is known as the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir), Order, 1954, dated 14th May 1954. This Order superseded the earlier Order of 1950 and has been treated as the parent Order to which subsequently amendments were made by the orders of the President issued under article 370 of the Constitution of India. This Order implements the Delhi Agreement as ratified by the Constituent Assembly. This Order has been modified and amended from time-to-time. It regulates the constitutional position of the state of Jammu and Kashmir vis-à-vis Indian Union. This Order contains the provisions of the Indian Constitution pertaining to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession and also many other provisions relating to several other matters not specified in the Instrument which apply to the state. This Order settled the entire constitutional position of the state within the state framework of the Constitution of India excepting only the internal Constitution of the state government which was to be framed by the Constituent Assembly of the State.

1.4.7 LATEST DEVELOPMENT: APPLICATION OF INDIAN CONSTITUTION

On August 05, 2019 the Government of India had scrapped the special status granted to the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) by modifying Article 370 of the Constitution. Both houses of the Indian Parliament, the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha passed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, which proposes the bifurcation of the state into two union territories-Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir.

With the approval of the Bills by Indian Parliament, in August 2019 Article 370 and the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution that largely govern the Centre-State relations as well as State administration modified drastically and the new constitutional mechanisms have been replaced them.

With the Presidential Order issued in August 2019, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed historic political and geographic changes. It is to be divided into two union territories – Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir. Ladakh will not have a legislature, while Jammu and Kashmir will have a legislative assembly with 107 members. However, this assembly will not have the authority to pass laws relating to 'public order and the police'. The single largest party in the assembly will form the government, headed by a chief minister, and the assembly will have a five-year term, not six, as was the earlier case. A Lieutenant Governor will govern both Union territories. Of the six Lok Sabha seats currently with the state of Jammu and Kashmir, five will remain with the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, while one will go to Ladakh.

The following are the main changes to the political status of Jammu and Kashmir with the modification brought to the Constitution:

- Jammu and Kashmir will no longer have separate constitution, flag or anthem. The citizens of Jammu and Kashmir will not have dual citizenship-they will be citizens of India alone.
- As the new union territory of Jammu and Kashmir will be subject to the Indian Constitution, its citizens will now have the Fundamental Rights enshrined in that document; until now, this was not the case. Article 360, which can be used to declare a Financial Emergency, will now also be applicable.

- All laws passed by Parliament will be applicable in Jammu and Kashmir, including the Right to Information Act and the Right to Education Act.
- The Indian Penal Code will replace the Ranbir Penal Code of Jammu and Kashmir.
- As the government has modified the Article 370, diluting special status to Jammu and Kashmir, Article 35 (A), which originates from the provisions of Article 370 stands null and void. Any Indian citizen from any part of the country can now buy property in Jammu and Kashmir, take a state government job and enjoy scholarships and other government benefits. Children of a woman marrying outside Jammu and Kashmir will not lose property rights.

1.4.7 LET US SUM UP

Jammu and Kashmir's original accession, like all other princely states, was on three matters: defence, foreign affairs and communications. All the princely states were invited to send representatives to India's Constituent Assembly, which was formulating a constitution for the whole of India. They were also encouraged to set up constituent assemblies for their own states. Most states were unable to set up assemblies in time, but a few states did, in particular Saurashtra Union, Travancore-Cochin and Mysore. In May 1949, the rulers and chief ministers of all the states agreed to accept the Constitution of India as their own constitution. The states that did elect constituent assemblies suggested a few amendments which were accepted. The position of all the states (or unions of states) thus became equivalent to that of regular Indian provinces. In particular, this meant that the subjects available for legislation by the Central and State governments was uniform across India.

In the case of Kashmir, the representatives to the Constituent Assembly requested that only those provisions of the Indian Constitution that corresponded to the original Instrument of Accession should be applied to the State. Accordingly, the Article 370 was incorporated into the Indian Constitution, which stipulated that the other articles of the Constitution that gave powers to the Central Government would be applied to Jammu and Kashmir only with the concurrence of the State's Constituent Assembly. This was a “temporary provision” in that its applicability was intended to last till the formulation and adoption of the State's constitution. The State's Constituent Assembly dissolved itself on 25 January 1957 without recommending either

abrogation or amendment of the Article 370. However, the Presidential Order issued in August 2019 modified Article 370 and invalidated the earlier constitution. The state of Jammu and Kashmir divided into two Union Territories, that of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory with a provision to legislative body, and Ladakh Union Territory without a Legislative Body. With these modifications, a new chapter began to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

1.4.8 EXERCISE

1. What is the purpose of incorporating Article 370 to the Indian Constitution?
2. Write a note on Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir.
3. Detail those 10 points covered in the Delhi Agreement of 1952.
4. Briefly outline the developments in post-1952 Agreement.

2.1 ARTICLE 370 OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION: RATIONALE AND IMPLICATIONS

- Tirtharaj Bhoi

STRUCTURE

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2.1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will study the features, provisions and purpose of Article 370 incorporated in the Indian Constitution and its present times at present. After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- the historical background to incorporation of Article 370 in India Constitution;
- the main provisions in Article 370;
- the significance or insignificance of Article 370 in contemporary times.

2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Article 370 was included in the Constitution, not as an afterthought but after mature consideration by the Constitution-makers. It was a condition of Kashmir's accession to India and if that accession is sacrosanct, the condition must also be sacrosanct. Kashmir did not obviously want to join Pakistan. Kashmir procrastinated between independence and accession to India and chose the latter. Accession to India was conditional on Kashmir retaining its distinct cultural and regional identity. Article 370 assured the state all benefits of independent Kashmir without sacrificing the advantages of being a part of the larger Indian federation. It confers maximum autonomy upon the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In pursuance of the integration many constitutional exemptions are conferred over J&K state. The state of Jammu and Kashmir was included as a Part B state in the first schedule of the Constitution of India, as it was promulgated in 1950. But though the state was included as a Part B state, all the provisions of the Constitution applicable to Part B state were not extended to Jammu and Kashmir. While the Constitution of the other Part B states was laid down in Part VII of the Constitution of India (as promulgated in 1950), the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir State was to be framed by the Constituent Assembly of that State. Hence, the constitutional position and the special status available to the J&K state is somewhat differs from that of other states. The policy of the constitution as envisaged in the legal framework of article 370 is that the constitution was framed for the entire Union of India but any of its provisions would not apply to the territories of Jammu and Kashmir until and unless the President made an order to those effects.

Article 370 is included in that part of the Constitution which deals with the exceptions related to the constitution. This is a part that includes special and temporary provisions of Constitution. The idea underlying this part is that all those provision which cater to exceptional circumstances and which deal with transitional situations provisions are included in that part. Seen from this angle, Article 370 included provisions which were considered as 'Temporary Provisions' with respect to J&K. The temporary nature of the Article arises merely because the power to finalize the constitutional relationship between the state and the Union of India had been specifically vested in the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly. However, the State's Constituent Assembly dissolved itself on 25 January 1957 without recommending either abrogation or amendment of the Article 370. Thus the Article has become a permanent feature of

the Indian constitution. Since then it has become an important aspect as the articles incorporated in it are still guiding the state's relations with Indian Union. Hence, in this lesson, you will be introduced to the key elements of Article 370 and also to the special status of the Jammu and Kashmir in comparison to the other states of India.

2.1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As you have studied in the previous lesson, the state of Jammu and Kashmir has a unique status in the Indian Union. Unlike other Indian states, it has a separate constitution. The current status is based on the "Instrument of Accession" signed by the then ruler of the state, Maharajah Hari Singh, with the Government of India on 27 October 1947. In pursuance of the terms and conditions of the Instrument of Accession, the state was accorded special constitutional relationship, not given to any other state. The next major milestone in cementing the special relationship was on 26 January 1950, when the new Indian Constitution drafted by a Constituent Assembly came into effect. Article 370 in the Indian Constitution defined the special relationship of the state with the Indian Union. It also defined the mechanism for managing centre-state relations with specific reference to J&K.

Some of the other important events that influenced the drafting of Article 370 were the political turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir, the United Nations resolutions calling for a plebiscite in the state on the issue of accession to India, the governments of both India and Pakistan establishing political control over the territories of Kashmir under their control, and the representatives of all the other states choosing, in India's Constituent Assembly, to not assert their right to separate constitutions. The ruler of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India by an Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947 in respect of only three subjects - defence, foreign affairs and communications. A schedule listed precisely 16 topics under these heads plus four others (elections to Union legislature and the like). Clause 5 said that the Instrument could not be altered without the State's consent. Clause 7 read: "Nothing in this Instrument shall be deemed to commit me in any way to acceptance of any future Constitution of India or fetter my discretion to enter into arrangements with the Government of India under any such future Constitution." Kashmir was then governed internally by its own Constitution of 1939.

Negotiations were held on May 15 and 16, 1949 at Vallabhbhai Patel's residence in New Delhi on Kashmir's future set-up. Nehru and Abdullah were present. Foremost among the topics were "the framing of a Constitution for the State" and "the subjects in respect of which the State should accede to the Union of India." On the first, Nehru recorded in a letter to the Sheikh (on May 18) that both Patel and he agreed that it was a matter for the State's Constituent Assembly. "In regard to (ii) the Jammu and Kashmir State now stands acceded to the Indian Union in respect of three subjects; namely, foreign affairs, defence and communications. It will be for the Constituent Assembly of the State when convened, to determine in respect of which other subjects the State may accede". Article 370 embodies this basic principle which was reiterated throughout.

2.1.3 RATIONALE OF ARTICLE 370

It would be appropriate to recall the rationale given by founding fathers to justify the inclusion of Article 370 in the Constitution of India. While introducing the draft clause 306A (Article 370) in the Constituent Assembly of India, N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, a Minister in the Nehru Government without a portfolio, stated that the special condition prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir required special treatment. The special circumstances highlighted by him were as follows:

1. That there was a war going on within the limits of the State ;
2. That there was a cease fire agreed to at the beginning of the year and that cease fire was still on;
3. That the conditions in the State were still unusual and abnormal and had not settled down;
4. That a part of the State was still in the hands rebels and enemies;
5. That our country was entangled with the United Nations with regard to Jammu and Kashmir and it was not possible to say when we would be free from this entanglement;
6. That the Government of India had committed themselves to the people of Jammu and Kashmir in certain respects which commitments included an undertaking that an opportunity would be given to the people of the State to decide for themselves;

7. That the will of the people expressed through the instrument of a Constituent Assembly would determine the constitution of the state as well as the sphere of the Union jurisdiction over the state .

N. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar while explaining the scope of article 370 in the Constituent Assembly on 17th October, 1949 observed: “You will remember that the several of the clause provide for the concurrence of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir state. Now, these relate particularly to matters which are not mentioned in the Instrument of Accession, and it is one of our commitments to the people and the Government of Kashmir that no such additions should be made except with the consent of the Constituent Assembly which may be called in the state for the purpose of framing its Constitution”.

Explaining briefly the description of the effect of this Article, N. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar aptly remarked that the effect of Article 370 is Jammu and Kashmir State which is now a part of India will continue to be a part of India

2.1.4 ARTICLE 370: MAIN FEATURES

The position which emerged after the incorporation of Article 370 was only Article 1 and Article 370 of Indian Constitution where to apply to J&K State in their original form. Although the state became an integral part of Indian union by virtue of article 1 (and first schedule), the relations between India and J&K were to be governed by the provisions of Article 370. Article 370 on the other hand was the step towards the long cherished desire of Kashmiri leaders with regard to state autonomy. This article constitutionally promoted and protected the concept of state autonomy. The very fact that this Article begins with the words “Notwithstanding anything with the constitution” shows that it is a self-contained provision and has a specific purpose of its own. The object behind enacting Article 370, according to the Supreme Court ruling (in the case of Puran Lal Lakhani Pal versus the President of India in 1961) was to recognize the special position of the state of J&K and to provide this special position by limiting the power of union President and Parliament. It is by virtue of Article 370 that the Constituent Assembly of J&K was given the authority not only to frame the constitution for the state but to concur in the application of the Indian Constitution and in the extension of the jurisdiction of Indian Parliament to J&K. In accordance with these provisions the competence of Indian Parliament was restricted to (a) such

entries in the union and concurrent lists of the 7th Schedule to the Indian Constitution as corresponded to the subjects specified in the Instrument of Accession; (b) elaboration of which subjects was to be done by the president by an order, in consultation with the state government, additions to which were to be made with the concurrence of the state government.

Similarly, provisions of the Indian Constitution, other than Article 1, could be applied to J&K with or without modification by the president by an order, issued in the consultation with the state government, relating to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession and with the concurrence of the state government relating to the other matters. The modification or elimination of the provisions of Article 370 was provided for in clause 3. This could be done by the president by public notification. However, the recommendation of the constituent assembly of J&K State was necessary before the president could issue such a notification. The residuary powers were reserved for the state and the state Constituent Assembly which enacted in the double capacity of a Constituent Assembly and a Legislature was made the soul and decisive factor. Both the parliament and president enjoy merely a formal authority.

The core of clauses (1)(b)(i) and (1)(b)(ii) combined is that laws of Parliament on matters in the Union List and the Concurrent List can be made for J&K only after the ‘consultation’ or ‘concurrence’ of the State government depending on the subject matter of law. Under (1)(b)(i) Parliamentary laws on the subjects mentioned in the two said Lists conforming to Defence, External Affairs and Communications need ‘consultation’ with State Government; under (1)(b)(ii), Parliament’s laws on all other subjects will require the State’s “concurrence” before they are applied to the State. There is no State List for J&K because it was omitted by President’s order issued under Article 370 in September 1963.

Parliament today cannot extend laws to J&K in respect of 32 entries in the two existing Lists together; neither ‘consultation’ nor ‘concurrence’ enters the picture. Moreover, seven entries in Concurrent List stand substituted for J&K, further diluting the force of the two Lists put together. Clauses (1)(b)(i) and (1)(b)(ii) prevent the possibility of Parliamentary law being extended to J&K either because the consultation with State Government was not productive or because the State Government denied concurrence to that law. In extending Parliamentary legislations, J&K has been brought within ambit of over 260 Central laws with, and not without,

the 'concurrence of the State Government'. In practice any legislation of the Indian Parliament can be applied to J&K only if it receives sanction from that State's government.

The same has been clearly stated in the text of Article 370 (1) (b). "The power of Parliament to make laws for the said State shall be limited to" (i) matters in the Union and Concurrent Lists corresponding to the broad heads specified in the Instrument of Accession "and (ii) such other matters in the said Lists as, with the concurrence of the Government of the State the President may by Order specify". An Explanation defined "the Government of the State". Similar "concurrence" was required when extending provisions regarding Union institutions beyond the agreed ones. But Article 370 (2) stipulated clearly that if that concurrence is given "*before the Constituent Assembly... is convened, it shall be placed before such Assembly for such decision as it may take thereon*".

2.1.4.1 Purpose of the Article 370

The purpose of the Article 370 was clearly stated by Sheikh Abdullah while addressing the Constitutional Assembly: "in arriving at this arrangement the main consideration before our government was to secure a position for the state which would be the consistent with the requirement of maximum autonomy for the local organs of state power which are the ultimate source of authority in the state while discharging obligations as a unit of the federation". Abdullah further stated that "article 370, no doubt, has been mentioned as a temporary provisions in the constitution but that doesn't mean that it is capable of being abrogated, modified or replaced unilaterally. The temporary nature of article arises merely from the fact that the power to finalize the constitutional relationship between the state and union of Indian has been specifically vested in the J&K Constitution Assembly".

2.1.5 THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER OF 1950 &1954

In pursuance of the above provisions of the Constitution the President made the constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1950 in consultation with the specifying the matters with respect to which the union parliament would be competent to make laws for Jammu and Kashmir, relating to the three subjects Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications with respect to which Jammu and Kashmir had accede to India. Next, there was an Agreement

between the Government of India and of the State at Delhi in June 1952, as to the subjects over which the Union should have jurisdiction over the state, pending the decision of the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir. The Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir ratified the Accession to India and also the decision arrived at by the Delhi Agreement as regards the future relationship of the state with India early in 1954. In pursuance of this, the president in consultation with the state Government made the constitution (application to Jammu and Kashmir) order 1954 which came into force on the 14th of May 1954. This Order implemented the Delhi Agreement as ratified by the Constituent Assembly and also superseded the Order of 1950. According to this order, the jurisdiction of the Union extended to all Union subjects under the Constitution of India (subjects to certain slight alterations) instead of only the three subjects of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications with respect to which the State had acceded to India in 1947. This order as amended in 1963,1964,1965,1966,1972,1974and 1986,deals with the entire constitutional position of the State within the framework of the Constitution of India excepting only the internal Constituent Assembly of the State.

2.1.6 ARTICLE 370: SPECIAL PROVISIONS

As A.G.Noorani observes, Article 370 embodies six special provisions for Jammu and Kashmir. *First*, it exempted the State from the provisions of the Constitution providing for the governance of the States. Jammu and Kashmir was allowed to have its own Constitution within the Indian Union. *Second*, Parliament's legislative power over the State was restricted to three subjects - defence, external affairs and communications. The President could extend to it other provisions of the Constitution to provide a constitutional framework if they related to the matters specified in the Instrument of Accession. For this, only "consultation" with the State government was required since the State had already accepted them by the Instrument. But, *third*, if other "constitutional" provisions or other Union powers were to be extended to Kashmir, the prior "concurrence" of the State government was required. The *fourth* feature is that that concurrence was provisional. It had to be ratified by the State's Constituent Assembly. Article 370(2) says that "If the concurrence of the Government of the State... be given before the Constituent Assembly for the purpose of framing the Constitution of the State is convened, it shall be placed before such Assembly for such decision as it may take thereon". The *fifth* feature is that the State government's authority to give the "concurrence" lasts only till the State's Constituent Assembly

is “convened”. The *sixth* special feature, the last step in the process, is that Article 370(3) empowers the President to make an Order abrogating or amending it. But for this also “the recommendation” of the State's Constituent Assembly “shall be necessary *before* the President issues such a notification”.

2.1.7 ARTICLE 370: CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

By this time you must have understood that Article 370 was a temporary provision incorporated in the Constitution of India since the status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir in Indian Union was not settled when India's Constitution operationalised. Article 370 is the only connecting point between Indian Union and State of Jammu and Kashmir once the latter signed the Instrument of Accession. The final status of relationship between Indian Union and State of Jammu and Kashmir left to the decisions taken by Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir.

However, Nehru's intentions on Jammu and Kashmir are very clear from the beginning. Nehru was for the abrogation of Article 370. He thought that once the people of Jammu and Kashmir develop faith in India's democracy, secularism and development, they themselves volunteer for this. Some sort of assurance is required to the people till the time they gain confidence in India's political plurality. Hence, it is not surprising that, in spite of being an architect of Article 370, Nehru told the Lok Sabha on November 27, 1963, that “it [Article 370] has been eroded, if I may use the word, and many things have been done in the last few years which have made the relationship of Kashmir with the Union of India very close. There is no doubt that Kashmir is fully integrated...We feel this process of gradual erosion of Article 370 is going on. Some fresh steps are being taken and in the next month or two they will be completed. We should allow it to go on.”

Union Home Minister Gulzari Lal Nanda said in the Lok Sabha on December 4, 1964, that the “only way to take the Indian Constitution to Jammu and Kashmir is through the application of Article 370. It is a tunnel. It is through this tunnel that a good deal of traffic has already passed and more will.” Nanda further stated that: “What happens is that only the shell is there. Article 370, whether you keep it or not, has been completely emptied of its contents. Nothing has been left in it.”

How the Article 370 is already 'eroded' as Nehru stated or only 'shell' is left as Nanda emphasised can be seen if we take into cognisance the post-1953 developments. For instance, The Delhi Agreement of 1952 stated that "the residuary powers of legislation" (on matters not mentioned in the State List or the Concurrent List), which Article 248 and Entry 97 (Union List) confer on the Union, will not apply to Kashmir. However, the order of 1986 purported to apply to the State Article 249, which empowers Parliament to legislate even on a matter in the State List if a Rajya Sabha resolution so authorises it by a two-thirds vote. But it so amended Article 249 in its application to Kashmir as in effect to apply Article 248 instead – "any matter specified in the resolution, being a matter which is not enumerated in the Union List or in the Concurrent List". The Union thus acquired the power to legislate not only on all matters in the State List, but others not mentioned in the Union List or the Concurrent List – the residuary power. In relation to other States, an amendment to the Constitution would require a two-thirds vote by both Houses of Parliament plus ratification by the States (Article 368). For Kashmir, executive orders have sufficed since 1953

This is the reason for events took a tragic course since 1953 onwards. The person on whom Nehru reposed a faith as integrator of the State of Jammu and Kashmir with Indian Union, Sheikh Abdullah, started criticizing Nehru and Union government, which led to his dismissal from the office and imprisonment on August 9, 1953. On May 14, 1954 came a comprehensive Presidential Order under Article 370. It was made with the "concurrence" of the State government and drew validity from a resolution of the Constituent Assembly on February 15, 1954 which approved extension to the State of some provisions of the Constitution of India. The Order sought to implement the Delhi Agreement. Besides, the order in some respects went beyond the Delhi Agreement. It certainly paved the way for more such Orders – all with "the concurrence of the State Government", each elected. Ninety four of the 97 Entries in the Union List and 26 of the 47 in the Concurrent List were extended to Kashmir as were 260 of the 395 Articles of the Constitution.

This resulted in the alternation of the basic structure of the Constitution of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The head of State elected by the State legislature was replaced by a Governor nominated by the Centre. Article 356 (imposition of President's Rule) was applied despite provision in the State's Constitution for Governor's rule (Section 92). This was done on November 21, 1964. On November 24, 1966, the Governor replaced the Sadar-i-Riyasat after the

State's Constitution had been amended on April 10, 1965 by the 6th Amendment. On July 23, 1975 an Order was made debarring the State legislature from amending the State Constitution on matters in respect of the Governor, the Election Commission and “the composition” of the Upper House, the Legislative Council. Hence, in short, Article 370 never stopped the intervention of Centre or Union Government in matters related to State of Jammu and Kashmir. This is the reason why no political party in the Centre made attempts to repeal it. Though the BJP periodically demanded for its abrogation, but it never made serious attempts when it was in power.

On the other hand, the Supreme Court of India and High Court of Jammu and Kashmir also rejected the petitions appealing for abrogation of Article 370 as it is only a ‘temporary’ one. The Supreme Court five-judge bench without referring to *Prem Nath Kaulv.State of J&K*, pronounced a decision in *Sampat Prakash vs. State of J&K* ruled that (i) the wording of Article 370 makes no mention of the completion of work of the Constituent Assembly or its dissolution and (ii) the Constituent Assembly recommended that Article 370 should continue.

Hence, Article 370 of the Constitution has become bedrock of the constitutional relationship between Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of India. The J&K High Court in October 2015 observed that the provision has acquired a state of permanence. However, the High Court’s comment should be seen in the limited context in which it was made. Its remark that Article 370 is beyond amendment, repeal or abrogation flows from an analysis of the question whether the section had become inoperative after the State’s Constituent Assembly framed its Constitution, and then the Assembly itself ceased to exist. In fact, the question whether its temporary provisions had acquired permanence was not before the court; nor was the court hearing a challenge to the validity of the Article per se. It was dealing with the validity of reservation in promotions among government employees in J&K. Ultimately, it struck down the provision for quotas in promotions on the ground that clause 4A of Article 16, introduced by the Constitution (77th) Amendment to protect reservation in promotions, was not applicable to J&K. This is because there is no Presidential Order making the new clause applicable to the State. One of the features of Article 370 is that a Constitution amendment becomes applicable to J&K only after the President issues an order. Without the protection of the clause, there is no scope for reservation in promotions, as the Supreme Court had barred such quotas in *Indra Sawhney*.

In its implications for Article 370, the High Court verdict has not broken any new ground. If anything, it is a reiteration of earlier Supreme Court rulings that Article 370 continues to be operative. It impliedly rules that the President's power to issue orders, as has been done over the years making several laws and provisions of the Constitution applicable to J&K, remains untrammelled. By reiterating the core requirement that even provisions affording constitutional protection require the use of Article 370 and orders issued under its imprimatur, the court has reaffirmed that importance of the Article and showed how abrogating it will weaken the legal basis for J&K to be part of India, as the accession was linked to its getting special status. Some may find the observation that Article 370 is beyond repeal or abrogation debatable. Parliament's amending power under Article 368 remains available for such a measure, but it is far wiser for any dispensation to wait for a resolution of the dispute with Pakistan over the entirety of Kashmir's territory before revisiting the State's constitutional status. Any premature action on this front may be a needless misadventure.

2.1.8 MODIFICATION TO ARTICLE 370, AUGUST 2019

On the August 05, 2019, the Government of India modified Article 370 to remove any discrepancy between Union Constitution and Jammu and Kashmir Constitution, which resulted in eliminating the special status the state enjoyed so far in the federal structure of India. With the modifications brought by Union government, the state of Jammu and Kashmir ceased to be State but a two union territories, that of Jammu and Kashmir with a provision to legislative body and Ladakh without a legislative body. The constitutional amendment not only brings Jammu and Kashmir on par with other union territories of India but also empowered the Union Government with many executive powers including Law and Order.

Contrary to the many news reports that have wrongly stated that the Union Government has scrapped Article 370, in reality, it has not been scrapped but modified. The Presidential order signed by the President of India has not scrapped Article 370. But invoking this very article special status of Jammu & Kashmir has been withdrawn. Thus Article 370 is very much on the statute book. In fact, the President had used his powers under Article 370 to fundamentally alter the provision, extending all Central laws, instruments and treaties to Kashmir. Moreover, since

Presidential Order of August 5 has extended all the provisions of the Constitution to Kashmir, Fundamental rights chapter has now been extended.

By superseding the 1954 Order, the Centre's notification issued in August 2019 takes away the special rights and privileges enjoyed by the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The 1954 Order had introduced a proviso to Article 3, namely that "no Bill providing for increasing or diminishing the area of the State of Jammu and Kashmir or altering the name or boundary of that State shall be introduced in Parliament without the consent of the Legislature of that State". That power of the State Legislature to give prior consent does not exist anymore. It has effectively allowed the entire provisions of the Indian Constitution, with all its amendments, exceptions and modifications, to apply to the area of Jammu and Kashmir. It declares that "all the provisions of the Constitution, as amended from time to time, shall apply in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir".

The 1954 Order had also brought into existence Article 35A. This Article gave the State Legislature of Jammu and Kashmir exclusive power to define classes of persons who are/shall be permanent residents of the State; to confer permanent residents special rights and privileges and impose restrictions upon other persons from outside the State; make laws and conditions for State government employment, acquisition of immovable property, settlement rights, scholarships and other forms of aid from the State government. Hence, with superseding of 1954 Order, the Article 35 A also lost its validity.

With the removal of the 1954 Order, the power of the State Legislature ceases to exist and Parliamentary laws, including that of reservation, would apply to Jammu and Kashmir as it does in other parts of the country. The government called this the end of "positive discrimination" and the closing of the "chasm" between residents of J&K and citizens of other parts of the country. The removal of the 1954 Order further also negates a clause which was added to Article 352. The Order had mandated that no proclamation of Emergency on grounds "only of internal disturbance or imminent danger shall have effect" in the State unless with the concurrence of the State government.

The Jammu and Kashmir reorganization Act entrusts wide powers to the Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and makes it the "duty" of the Chief Minister of the Union Territory to "communicate" all administrative decisions and proposals of

legislation with the LG. Moreover, all Central laws and State laws of J&K would apply to the new Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh. Assets and liabilities of J&K and Ladakh would be apportioned on the recommendation of a Central Committee within a year. Employees of State public sector undertakings and autonomous bodies would continue in their posts for another year until their allocations are determined. The police and public order is to be with the Centre.

2.1.9 LET US SUM UP

Article 370 is perhaps the most controversial provision of the Constitution of India. It deals exclusively with Jammu & Kashmir State that came under the administrative control of the Government of India when the erstwhile princely State of Jammu and Kashmir signed the Instrument of Accession. Termed as the ‘umbilical cord’ of the Indian Constitution it is the only link between J&K and India. Under Part XXI of the Constitution of India, which deals with the “Temporary, Transitional and Special provisions”, J&K has been accorded special status under Article 370. Even though included in 1st Schedule as 15th state of Indian Union, all the provisions of the Indian Constitution which are applicable to other states are not applicable to J&K. Further the State has a separate Constitution, its own State Flag. All Prime Ministers of India to date have vowed to protect it to give the people of Jammu and Kashmir a feeling that theirs is a State that is different from other States in India. Yet, over the period of the time, the special status conferred to the State was eroded with many provisions of the Constitution of India are made applicable in the state. Article 370 never came in the way if Centre wants to intervene in a particular matter seriously. As Nanda has rightly mentions, the ‘core’ has gone, only the ‘shell’ is left.

EXERCISE

1. Outline the historical background for the incorporation of the Article 370 in Indian Constitution.
2. State the main provisions in the Article 370.
3. The core of Article 370 has eroded only the shell is left. Do you agree with this?

2.2 1952 NEHRU-SHEIKH ABDULLAH AGREEMENT AND 1975 INDIRA GANDHI AND SHEIKH ABDULLAH ACCORD AND THEIR IMPACT

- Tirtharaj Bhoi

STRUCTURE

- 2.2.0 Objectives**
- 2.2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2.2 Contextual Background**
- 2.2.3 The Delhi Agreement, 1952**
 - 2.2.3.1 Main Features of the Delhi Agreement
 - 2.2.3.2 Significance of Delhi Agreement
- 2.2.4 Developments of Post-1952 Agreement**
- 2.2.5 Indira-Sheikh Accord 1974**
 - 2.1.5.1 Main Features of the Accord
- 2.2.6 Let Us Sum UP**
- 2.2.7 Exercise**

2.2.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson explains two important agreement signed by Union of India and State of Jammu and Kashmir to determine the principle that govern the relations between them. After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- the political context that led to the conclusion of 1952 Delhi Agreement;
- the main provisions in 1952 Agreements;
- the developments in post-1952 agreement; and
- the main features of 1974 Indira-Sheikh Accord.

2.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The accession of Jammu and Kashmir to Union of India has happened gradually over the period ever since the Maharaja of erstwhile princely state Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession. Though Article 370 was incorporated in the Constitution of India to indicate special status accorded to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, however, the jurisdiction of Union and State were not clearly spelled out other than assigning three subjects – Defence, External Affairs and Communications – to the Union of India. The Delhi Agreement of 1952 and Indira-Sheikh Accord of 1974 are, in reality, filled this gap of specifying the jurisdiction of Union and the State. In the following sections, you will study the detailed provisions incorporated in both agreements and how they altered the relations between Union of India and State of Jammu and Kashmir.

2.2.2 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

According to the Instrument of Accession of 26th October, 1947, the State of Jammu and Kashmir had acceded to the Indian Union on three subjects – Foreign Affairs, Communications and Defence. Rest of the matters was left to the State's discretion. The result was that the applicability of fundamental rights, citizenship, Supreme Court, Election Commission, Comptroller and Auditor General, etc., were put within the State's residuary powers. The then State Government headed by Sheikh Abdullah had, thus, a free hand to conduct the internal administration of the State.

However, credit must be given to the new regime for introducing land reforms in the state at a time when nobody in Pakistan and very few in India had thought of making experiment. The reforms brought about by the popular government of the state, such as grant of fixity of tenure to the tenants in respect of tenancy holdings; fixation of the maximum rental payable by the tenant to the landlords; the rationalization of land tenures; providing for summary reinstatement of a tenant, who had been wrongfully ejected; the abolition of indebtedness and usury; restitution of mortgaged properties; relief to the distressed debtors; abolition of *Jagirs, Mufais and Mukararies*. The Big Landed Estate Abolition Act; the denial of compensation for the expropriated landlords, abolition of hereditary monarchy and making of the office of the executive head of the state elective etc. were progressive in content and measures of great

significance. As a consequence of these measures some criticism and controversy rose in some parts of Jammu as well as outside the state. The critics in India even suspected the very motives of these reforms. But in order to put this economic programme of 'Naya Kashmir' into operation the state leaders demanded some of the concessions and partial application of Chapter III of the Indian Constitution. The reforms, though theoretically sound, were introduced in a huff. The breathless hurry in which a time old system was abolished left everyone wondering. The old system of money lending was abolished, but no effort was made to provide alternative means of credits to co-operative movement monopolized by a few individuals.

The land reform programme was not implemented satisfactorily. All the facts of omission and commission inevitably created large scale discontent in various parts of the State. Kashmir Valley's wails, Ladakh's lament and Jammu's jingoism, provided an opportunity to the reactionary elements both outside and inside the State to exploit the situation with a view to precipitating a crisis. This became one of the main causes of the Praja Parishad movement in Jammu. The land reform programme mainly affected that section of the Jammu Province which consisted of landlords and whose only source of income was land. Meanwhile, the Praja Parishad, the only opposition party in Jammu charged the All Jammu And Kashmir National Conference and its government with adopting dubious methods in the elections of the Kashmir Assembly. Mirza Mohd Beg, the then Chairman of the Basic Principles Committee, declared that the State of J&K would be "an autonomous Republic with the Indian Union, with a separate Citizenship. Beg's statement was deeply resented not only in Jammu, but in Ladakh and created serious apprehension about the credibility of the leaders of Kashmir. The already pent-up feelings of the people of Jammu were kindled and the result was protest and agitations against the government. They developed the psychological feeling that the new regime was "Anti-Dogra." These feelings were there right from the day when the royal dynasty was terminated. They started criticizing the Governmental Policies and demanded more integration and abrogation of Article 370. The result was internal instability.

Another reason which threatened internal stability was the undue intervention of Indian leadership in Kashmir affairs, the wrong interpretation and exaggeration by the press, and the speeches delivered by the National Conference Leadership during that period. Mr. Beg's Announcement in the State Constituent Assembly that "so far as the constitution of the state is concerned we aim at making its frame work such that the state will be an autonomous unit within

the Indian union” was highly criticised by the Indian press. Indian leaders and the press took autonomy for independence. Even. N.G. Ayyanger, the then Minister of state of India who visited Jammu in April, 1952 to study the situation and to cool passions, advised that the framers of the state constitution to be practical and not led by shibboleths and theocratic idea and rather to display a measure of political wisdom. At his instance the Praja Parishad leaders were released. But Sheikh Abdullah felt hurt by central interference. In another speech on April 6, 1952 at Hazaratbal, Sheikh Abdullah pointed out that in no way Kashmiris were prepared to renounce their cherished ideology in furtherance of which they had offered blood and sweat during the last two decades. He added that Kashmiris had acceded to India in three subjects – Defence, External Affairs and Communications and they enjoyed complete freedom in their internal affairs.

As a recitation in some emotional outburst Sheikh Abdullah made certain outspoken statements, for example, his speech on 29th March, 1952, in the Constituent Assembly, wherein he declared: "... we are a hundred per cent sovereign body, Furthermore his speech at Ranbir Singh Pura on 11th April, 1952, referred the demands of full application of the Union Constitution to the state as "Unrealistic, childish and insane" arguments. He further said: "No one can deny that the communal spirit still exists in India. Many Kashmiris are apprehensive as to what will happen to them and their position if, for instance, something happens to Pandit Nehru. As realist, we Kashmiris have to provide for all eventualities. If a special status for Kashmir was not granted in the Indian Constitution, how can we convince the Muslims in Kashmir that India does not interfere in the internal affairs of Kashmir? We have acceded to India in regard to defence, foreign affairs and communications in order to ensure a sort of internal autonomy. If our right to shape our own destiny is challenged and if there is a resurgence of communalism in India, how are we to convince the Muslims of Kashmir that India does not intend to swallow up Kashmir.....Such developments might lead to a break in the accession of Kashmir to India."

Sheikh Abdullah repeatedly assured his people that he had never surrendered to Muslim communalism of Pakistan and-would never surrender to Hindu communalism of India. All this caused a lot of suspense and a chain of angry reaction again him. On the other hand the Assembly of Kashmir Unanimously adopted a separate flag for the state on 7th June 1952 and the interim report of the Basic principle Committee for the abolition of heredity monarchy and the elective head of the state on 12th June 1952. However, the movement for autonomy of the

state in the Valley and for its full integration with India in Jammu were in reality seemed complimentary. Sheikh Abdullah said, "If Jammu and Ladakh so desire they can decide to integrate with India and leave the Valley free to have a limited accession."

Actually, what Sheikh Abdullah wanted and wished for was neither the accession of the state to Pakistan nor its independence, but his slogan was "Maximum autonomy for the State within the Indian union," which had been misinterpreted since his Ranbir Singh Pura speech. Politicians in India expressed dissatisfaction with these statements of Sheikh Abdullah, and the result was uproar in the state and in India. Pandit Nehru, who otherwise had been giving support to the policy of his old friend, declared that he did not like these, especially the tone of his speeches. Indian leaders got alarmed on seeing the deteriorating internal situation of the State which could have provided a golden opportunity to interested foreign powers. A sort of tug of war was going on between the integrationists and autonomists. So, left with no alternative, the Indian Government intervened and invited Sheikh Abdullah for talks in Delhi. But he refused to court for several months. He sent his emissaries to prepare the ground for an agreement which would stipulate a privileged, autonomous position for Kashmir in the Indian Union.

2.2.3 THE DELHI AGREEMENT, 1952

However, compelled by circumstances, Sheikh Abdullah agreed to visit Delhi for talks; and it was in the month of July, 1952, that an agreement was signed. Delhi agreement was a further guarantee of the special status of Kashmir. In an statement made on July, 24th, 1952, in the Lok Sabha, the Indian Prime Minister gave details of the terms of the agreement concluded after a week of negotiations. The subjects covered in these negotiations were:

1. Residuary Powers;
2. National Flag;
3. Powers of the Indian President;
4. Conduct of Elections to the Houses of Parliament;
5. Headship of the State;
6. Citizenship;
7. Emergency Provisions;
8. Fundamental rights;

9. Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of India and

10. Financial Integration.

On most of those subjects, barring the last three, agreements were reached. The Residuary Powers remained with the State, the State flag was to continue for historical and sentimental reasons connected with their struggle for freedom, but the supreme position of the Indian Flag was recognized. The power of pardon etc. of the President and applicability of Article 324 to the election to the parliament would continue. On the question of the headship of the State the decision of the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly was accepted and it was suggested that the Sadar-i-Riyasat should be elected by the Assembly for a five years, and be recognized by the President. Regarding citizenship, it was recognized that although under Article 5 of the Indian constitution the residents of Jammu and Kashmir would be citizens of India but the State Legislature could define their permanent residents and confer on them special rights and privileges, especially in regard to the acquisition of property and holding of employment under the state.

On the question of emergency it was agreed that Article 352 should apply to Jammu and Kashmir but the proclamation of emergency issued by the President on grounds of internal disturbances or imminent danger thereof must not be made in relation to Jammu and Kashmir except on the request or with the concurrence of the State Government. The Fundamental Rights of the Indian Constitution could not be applied to Jammu and Kashmir in full because of a different political situation in the state and because of the socio-economic policies of the State Government under the New Kashmir Programme. It was decided that the whole matter should be studied further to find which fundamental rights should be applied to Jammu and Kashmir, and with what modifications. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court was another question over which final agreement was not forthcoming. The Supreme Court's Jurisdiction was recognized with regard to such fundamental rights as would be agreed to by the state, and also regarding disputes mentioned in Article 131 of the Indian Constitution. It would be final court of appeal, but detailed examination of this would be necessary, and it was agreed to consider it further some other time. Finally, the necessity of some financial arrangement was seen, but a detailed and objective examination was considered necessary. Pandit Nehru while justifying the Delhi Agreement in Parliament, said: "...there was general agreement that there should be fundamental rights and these rights should apply to the state. But again there were great apprehensions in the

minds of our friends from Kashmir. First of all, the question was how far these Fundamental Rights might come in the way of their land legislation or any other development of it. The second thing was that, all the business of invasion of Kashmir, war, cease fire, all kinds of continuing tension's difficulties due to infiltrating etc., espionage cases, there is sabotage and unrest. So we were told that some part of the Fundamental Rights might very well hamper the activities of the State Government from taking (necessary) precautions. We agreed that this was essential in the interest of Kashmir, situated as the State is now”.

During the course of the Lok Sabha debate on Delhi Agreement on 7th August, 1952, Pt. Nehru further said: "The strongest bonds that bind us will not be armies or even of Constitution to which so much references have been made but bonds which are stronger than the Constitution and armies – bonds that bind through love, affection and understanding." Indian leaders justified the Agreement on account of the abnormal conditions in the State caused by invasion etc.” Nehru, however, arranged a meeting of all the opposition elements of the parliament with Sheikh Abdullah, who congratulated him on the Agreement.

2.2.3.1 Main Features of the Delhi Agreement, 1952

The main features of this agreement are outlines below.

- (i) In view of the uniform and consistent stand taken up by the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly that sovereignty in all matters other than those specified in the Instrument of Accession continues to reside in the State, the Government of India agreed that, while the residuary powers of legislature vested in the Centre in respect of all States other than Jammu and Kashmir, in the case of the latter they vested in the State itself;
- (ii) It was agreed between the two Governments that in accordance with article 5 of the Indian Constitution, persons who have their domicile in Jammu and Kashmir shall be regarded as citizens of India, but the State legislature was given power to make laws for conferring special rights and privileges on the 'state subjects' in view of the 'State Subject Notifications of 1927 and 1932 the State Legislature was also empowered to make laws for the 'State Subjects' who had gone to Pakistan on account of the communal disturbances of 1947, in the event of their return to Kashmir;

- (iii) As the President of India commands the same respect in the State as he does in the other Units of India, articles 52 to 62 of the Constitution relating to him should be applicable to the State. It was further agreed that the power to grant reprieves, pardons and remission of sentences etc., would also vest in the President of India;
- (iv) The Union Government agreed that the State should have its own flag in addition to the Union flag, but it was agreed by the State Government that the State flag would not be a rival of the Union flag, it was also recognised that the Union flag should have the same status and position in Jammu and Kashmir as in the rest of India, but for historical reasons connected with the freedom struggle in the State, the need for continuance of the State flag was recognised;
- (v) There was complete agreement with regard to the position of the Sadar-i- Riyasat; though the Sadar-i-Riyasat was to be elected by the State Legislature, he had to be recognised by the President of India before his election.

2.2.3.2 Significance of 1952 Agreement

Delhi agreement was crafted in 1952 by mutual agreement between Prime Minister of India and State of Jammu and Kashmir regarding the contours of State's association with India. Delhi agreement as per Sheikh Abdullah, included 'certain broad principles and tentative decisions'. Delhi agreement was not an agreement for the sake of agreement but a bunch of 'tentative decisions' for future exploration with regard to integration of State of Jammu and Kashmir with union of India.

Under this agreement, the J&K State was given a special status under the Indian Constitutional frame work (Article 2 of the Constitution itself). Consequently, the Constituent Assembly elected Karan Singh as the first Sadar -i- Riyasat on November 15, 1952, thus bringing to an end the 106 years old hereditary Dogra rule in the J&K State.

The Nehru-Abdullah Agreement in July 1952 ("the Delhi Agreement") confirmed that "the residuary powers of legislation" (on matters not mentioned in the State List or the Concurrent List), which Article 248 and Entry 97 (Union List) confer on the Union, will not apply to Kashmir.

The most important provision of the agreement was the emergency powers of the President of India. As per Art.352 of the Indian Constitution, President has the power to declare emergency in case of invasion, external danger or internal disturbance. But as per the agreement in case of internal disturbance, emergency can only be declared at the request or the concurrence of the Govt. of the state. Pt Nehru while making a statement on Delhi Agreement on July 1952 had described "the article an unusual provision and by no means final".

2.2.4 DEVELOPMENTS OF POST-1952 AGREEMENT

A serious opposition to S. M. Abdullah had developed in Jammu under the Praja Parishad, which launched a political movement with Prem Nath Dogra as its leader. Syama Prasad Mukherjee was the President of Jan Sangh Party at the national level who commented that there was, or would soon be, "two Constitutions, two flags and two Prime Ministers in one country and cannot be tolerated". The State Praja Parishad, Jan Sangh and R.S.S. joined their hands together and advocated the abolition of Article 370 of Indian Constitution.

In Nov. 1952, the Praja Parishad leader, Prem Nath Dogra and his close associate Shri Sham Lal were detained. So, the situation in Jammu grew tense within the spring of 1953 and Dr. Mukherjee supported agitation outside the State and in May 1953, he left for Jammu but was arrested by I.G.P. Kashmir at State border (Lakhanpur/Kathua) on May 11, 1953 and taken to Srinagar in custody. Unfortunately Mukherjee died in the Government. Hospital, Srinagar on June 23, 1953. The popular slogans of the Praja Parishad agitators were – "*ek desh mein do vidhan; ek desh mein do nishan; ek desh mein do pradhan nahi chalen gay*" (in one country , two Constitutions; in one country two flags , in one country two Prime Ministers will not be tolerated).

The unresolved issues indicated in the Delhi Agreement could not be taken care of due to dismissal of Sheikh Govt. on Aug.9, 1953 and installation of Bakshi Ghulam Mohd as the new Prime Minister of J&K State. With the passage of time, The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954 was promulgated by the President of India in consultation with the Government of J&K, regulating the constitutional status of the State; and apart from it several Central laws got extended to the J&K State and even the nomenclature of Sadar-i-Riyasat and Prime Minister were changed to Governor and Chief Minister on March 30, 1965.

Despite of continuous efforts by various political parties, Art 370 of the Indian Constitution could neither be made permanent nor abolished, so it continues to be as such in the Indian Constitution with J&K having its own Constitution and State flag and resulting into non-application and non-extension of Central laws without approval of the State Legislature.

From 1953 to 1975, Chief Ministers of that State had been nominees of Delhi. Their appointment to that post was legitimised by the holding of farcical and totally rigged elections in which the Congress party led by Delhi's nominee was elected by huge majorities.

2.2.5 INDIRA- SHEIKH ACCORD 1974

Central Government was keen to arrive at a sound solution of Kashmir Tingle because Kashmir issue was still being treated as an international issue (as is indicated by Tashkant talks and Shimla Agreement). In spite of the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah in 1953 and coming up of a number of new leaders of the All Jammu And Kashmir National conference and Congress parliamentary party such as G. M. Bakshi, Kh. Shamsuddin, G.M. Sadiq and Qasim, the problem of communalism and secessionism continued not only to exist but had taken a serious dimension in the State. People of the Valley seemed to have not been pacified with different regimes since August, 1953. Sheikh Abdullah was still regarded as undisputed leader of the Valley and his influences in the political circles still regarded as paramount. Some of the Kashmiri leaders even challenged the state accession with the Indian Union and pleaded for the holding of plebiscite to decide it finally. Moreover, Pakistani influence on the people of the Valley was also on increase.

In the light of the circumstances mentioned above Indian leadership particularly Mrs. Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, seemed to have been conceived that it was not possible to get the popular support from the Valley by ignoring Sheikh Abdullah as well as no final solution of Kashmir issue would be possible without taking Sheikh Abdullah into confidence. On the other hand, the failure of Pakistani army to capture Kashmir by force in the past, the then political turmoil in Pakistan, because of refusal of West Pakistani leaders to accept Mujub-ur-Rehman from East Pakistan whose party secured majority in the then Assembly Elections, as the Prime Minister of Pakistan, subsequent civil war in East Pakistan, Pakistan armies massacring, raping and commissioning of other atrocities on the co-Muslim brethren of East Pakistan, and secession of the Pakistan and emergence of Bangladesh as a new State, had deep impact on the thinking of

Kashmiri leadership. Most of them were of the opinion that the people of the state might have been treated by the Pakistani leadership in the same way as they did in East Pakistan if the state acceded to Pakistan. Moreover they were also clear in their mind that the possibility of Kashmir to be independent was very bleak because of the fact that it was surrounded by a number of countries. They finally seemed to have been convinced that if there could be any solution of their problem, it would be within the framework of Indian Constitution.

This change in the life of the sub-continent, the changing attitude of the central leadership and the policy of liberalisation adopted by the then state government and the offer of Syed Mir Qasim to opposition leaders in Kashmir including Sheikh Abdullah to join the mainstream of State's political life invoked a favourable response from Sheikh Abdullah. He, therefore, thought that it was better for their benefits to reconcile their position and try to solve the problems peacefully and in a spirit of mutual understanding. He realised that the method they had adopted in their struggle for freedom had practically denied the people to have a government of their own choice. The leaders of the plebiscite front, therefore, tried to rethink on their future in Kashmir. They wanted to have a government of their own choice for the benefit of common people in Kashmir. So they started to rethink on their terms with India and wanted to reach an understanding with the Union Government. Sheikh Abdullah, therefore, in a public speech, affirmed his faith in accession, secularism and democratic socialism. He, for the first time declared that his quarrel with India was not on the question of accession but on the quantum of autonomy of the state in its relationship with India.

Such kind of attitude of the Plebiscite Front leaders encouraged Indian Government to seek a compromise with Sheikh Abdullah. The central government was very such keen to arrive at a sound solution about Kashmir problem. For the first time awareness and keen desire to have a dialogue between Sheikh Abdullah and New Delhi was voiced in Lok Sabha by Shamim Ahmed Shamim. Shamim was asserting the need for a dialogue with the ousted Kashmir leader. The Prime Minister Indira Gandhi thought, to de-internationalise the Kashmir issue, it was better to have an agreement with Sheikh Abdullah.

Consequently, Prime Minister of India, Gandhi in 1972 said that she wanted a new chapter to open with regard to Kashmir leadership. She had realised that the Kashmir problem could not be solved unless the leaders of the plebiscite Front were taken into confidence.

Accordingly, Sheikh Abdullah, the patron of the Plebiscite Front, reciprocated the call and made it clear that he would not say "no" to Mrs. Indira Gandhi's expressed desire to turn over a new leaf in relation between India and Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah expressed his desire to make a limited beginning with the hope that the condition will take a turn for better and that the people of Kashmir will come closer to India. All these factors pressed together paved the way for table negotiations and the Centre and State leadership continued to find ways for a better solution of Kashmir within the constitutional framework of India. These deliberations were later pursued by Parthasarthy, the emissary of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

The discussions started between Beg and G. Parthasarthy on constitutional relationship between centre and state in which Swaran Singh, Sayed Mir Qasim and D. P. Dhar also made their contributions. Most of the people described the negotiations for the beginning of a new chapter in the affairs of the state. The Chief Minister, Syed Mir Qasim, admitted that Sheikh Abdullah could played a great role in strengthening the democratic and socialist forces in the country. Negotiations between Sheikh and Mrs. Gandhi or more accurately between their emissaries Mirza Afzal Beg and Parthasarthy dragged on for full four years before a mutually satisfactory agreement was reached. The talks centred round the statement of Sheikh Abdullah upholding the finality of Kashmir's accession to India and demanding maximum autonomy as envisaged in the instrument of accession. The Plebiscite Front leadership wanted the centre to retrace the steps it had taken since the Delhi Agreement, which was signed twenty three years ago. This meant that the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, the Union Public Service Commission, the Election Commission which had been extended to the State had be rolled back.

2.2.5.1 Main Features of the Accord

THE text of the Accord, signed by G. Parthasarathi and Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, as representatives of the then Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, at New Delhi on November 13, 1974, which paved the way for resumption of power by the latter on February 25, 1975, stated:

1. The State of Jammu and Kashmir, which is a constituent unit of the Union of India, shall in its relations with the Union, continue to be governed by Article 370 of the Constitution of India.

2. The residuary powers of legislation shall remain with the State; however, Parliament will continue to have power to make laws relating to the prevention of activities directed towards disclaiming, questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India or bringing about secession of a part of the territory of India from the Union or causing insult to the Indian National Flag, the Indian National Anthem and the Constitution.
3. Where any provision of the Constitution of India had been applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir with adaptations and modifications, such adaptations and modifications can be altered or repealed by an Order of the President under Article 370, each individual proposal in its behalf being considered on its merits, but provisions of the Constitution of India already applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir without adaptation or modification are unalterable.
4. With a view to assuring freedom to the State of Jammu and Kashmir to have its own legislation on matters like welfare measures, cultural matters, social security, personal law, and procedural laws, in a manner suited to the special conditions in the State, it is agreed that the State Government can review the laws made by Parliament or extended to the State after 1953 on any matter relatable to the Concurrent List and may decide which of them, in its opinion, needs amendment or repeal. Thereafter, appropriate steps may be taken under Article 254 of the Constitution of India. The grant of the President's assent to such legislation would be sympathetically considered. The same approach would be adopted in regard to the laws to be made by Parliament in future under the proviso to Clause 2 of that Article; the State Government shall be consulted regarding the application of any such law to the State and the views of the State Government shall receive the fullest consideration.
5. As an arrangement reciprocal to what has been provided under Article 368, suitable modifications of that Article as applied to the State should be made by a Presidential Order to the effect that no law made by the Legislature of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, seeking to make any change in or in the effect of any provision of the Constitution of the State of Jammu and Kashmir relating to any of the under-mentioned

matters shall take effect unless the Bill, having been reserved for the consideration of the President, receives his assent; the matters are:

(a) the appointment, powers, functions, duties, privileges and immunities of the Governor; and

(b) the following matters relating to Elections, namely, the superintendence, direction and control of Elections by the Election Commission of India, eligibility for inclusion in the electoral rolls without discrimination, adult suffrage, and composition of the Legislative Council, being matters specified in Sections 138,139, 140 and 50 of the Constitution of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

6. No agreement was possible on the question of nomenclature of the Governor and the Chief Minister and the matter is therefore remitted to the principles.

Once the agreement was reached, the next step was automatic. Sheikh Abdullah assumed power as the Chief Minister of the State on February 26, 1975. He received tumultuous receptions everywhere. The people in the Valley were particularly hysterical in welcoming their hero back in power.

In case of Jammu, the response to the Kashmir Accord was far less sharp. Apparently because the people and political elite of the region were not directly involved in Abdullah's relations with the Centre.

The new Cabinet he announced for the State, included his second-in-command Mirza Afzal Beg from Kashmir and D.D. Thakur, a retired judge of the High Court, from Jammu. Mrs Gandhi offered to include me in her Cabinet to compensate me for non-inclusion in Abdullah's Cabinet. She advised me to tell Abdullah that I had done enough public work and wanted to retire.

As the above provisions of the agreement indicate, the Accord retained Article 370 but was also retained the changes made after 1953. The State could, however, review post 1953 legislation on the concurrent list which would be sympathetically considered by the President. The key provision enabling the centre to appoint Governor under article 356 was unaffected. The

agreement further provided that Parliament will continue to have power to make laws relating to prevention of activities directed towards disclaiming, questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India or bringing about cession of a part of Indian territory. There was no agreement on restoration of nomenclature of Wazir-i-Azam & Sadr-i-Riyasat which was left to the decision of Principal parties.

2.2.6 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson you have studied two important milestone related to the State of Jammu and Kashmir that is the Delhi Agreement of 1952 and Indira-Sheikh Accord of 1975. The common link for both the agreements is that they have established legal and constitutional relationship between Union of India and State of Jammu and Kashmir. The only contrast is that while the Delhi Agreement of 1952 is more tilted towards the autonomy of the State of Jammu and Kashmir by restricting the application of provisions of the Constitution of India to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the 1975 Agreement more or less integrated the state to the Union of India. Most of the changes brought to the state between 1952 and 1974 were kept intact, though it retained the special status of the Jammu and Kashmir as well as Article 370.

2.2.7 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the context for the conclusion of 1952 Agreement between Union of India and State of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. What are main features of 1952 Delhi Agreement?
3. Briefly outline the developments between 1952 Delhi Agreement and Indira-Sheikh Accord of 1974.
4. Write a note on important provisions included in the Indira-Sheikh Accord.

2.3 STATE STRUCTURES: LEGISLATURE, EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIARY

- Tirtharaj Bhoi

STRUCTURE

2.3.0 Objectives

2.3.1 Introduction

2.3.2 The Executive

2.3.3 The Governor

2.3.3.1 Powers of the Governor

2.3.4 The Council of the Ministers

2.3.4.1 The Chief Minister

2.3.5 The State Legislature

2.3.5.1 Legislative Assembly

2.3.5.2 The Legislative Council

2.3.6 The Judiciary

2.3.6.1 Judiciary in Jammu and Kashmir

2.3.6.2 Judiciary in Post-Independence Period

2.3.6.3 The High Court

2.3.6.2 The Jurisdiction of the High Court

2.3.7 The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019

2.3.8 Exercise

2.3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will study the three important organs of the state structure, i.e., Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- The composition of the state legislature and its proceedings;

- the composition of the executive and its powers, especially the power of the Governor, the Council of Ministers and the Chief Minister;
- the judiciary in Jammu and Kashmir in both pre- and post-independence period and the jurisdiction of the High Court.

2.3.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the important points to note about the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir is that it starts with defining the status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir within the Indian federal structure. It declares, 'The State to be an integral part of India'. This feature of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir is to be read along with the Article 1 of the Constitution of India by virtue of which this State is given the status of part of the federal structure. By the application of Article 1 of the Indian Constitution this State has been recognised as part of the Union of India. Following the classical doctrine of power, the governance in the state also clearly divided between three organs: the legislature, executive and judiciary.

2.3.2 THE EXECUTIVE

The executive power may be defined as the authority within the state which administers the law, carries on the business of government and maintains order within and security from without the state. The executive in Jammu and Kashmir state, like in any other states comprises of three offices: a) the Governor; b) the Chief Minister; and c) the Council of Ministers.

2.3.3 THE GOVERNOR

The executive power of J & K state vests in the head of the state, called the governor. By the constitution of J&K Act, 1965, 'sadar-i-riyasat' has been substituted by the governor. Prior to the amendment made in 1965, the head of the state had to be a permanent resident of the State and had to be indirectly elected by the legislature. However, vide the Sixth Amendment Act, 1965 the Governor shall be appointed by the President of India by warrant under his hand and seal. The normal term of the Governor is five years but notwithstanding the expiration of his term he shall continue to hold office until his successor enters upon the office. The Governor holds office during the pleasure of the President but he may, by writing under his hand addressed to the

President resign his office. No person, however, shall be eligible for appointment as a Governor unless he is a citizen of India and has completed the age of thirty years.

The Governor shall not be a member of either House of the legislature and if a member of either house is appointed the Governor, he shall be deemed to have vacated his seat in the House on the date on which he enters upon his office as a Governor. The Governor is debarred from holding any other office Governor shall before entering upon his office make and subscribes in the presence of the Chief justice of the High Court or in his absence, the senior most judge of that court available, an oath or affirmation in the prescribed form. The Governor is the Head of the State and not the Head of the Government to the Council of Ministers. He appoints the Chief Minister. (The term Chief Minister had been substituted by the Sixth Amendment Act, 1965 for 'Prime Minister'). The ministers, other than the Chief Minister, the Deputy Minister are also appointed by the Governor from amongst the legislators on the advice of the Chief minister and the other ministers, the appointment of the Deputy Ministers and the issuing of a proclamation in cases of breakdown of constitutional machinery in the State only on the advice of his Council of Ministers.

2.3.3.1 Powers of the Governor

The *Sadar-i-Riyasat* (now the Governor) is the Head of the State and exercises the executive powers of the State, either personally or through officers subordinate to him. In this connection ministers have been held to be officers subordinate. The legislatures can, however vest the executive function in authorities other than the Governor also.

The main reason for weakening of the position of the Governor is the formal recognition of the Chief Minister as the *de facto* Head of the administration for However, the Governor is empowered by the constitution to issue a proclamation in case of breakdown of the discretion, subject only to the power is to be exceeded by him in his discretion of the president of India. In the other India States this power is vested, not in the Governors, but in the President of India, who no doubt, acts on the advice of his Council of Ministers, since he is no specifically empowered to discharge any functions in his discretion.

All executive orders are to be issued in the name of the Governor, and if they are authenticated in accordance with rules made by the Governor, the courts may not enquire into the

question whether they were in fact made by the Governor or not. The Governor appoints the Chief Minister at this discretion and the remaining ministers at the advice of the Chief Minister. The Constitution does not specify the number of remaining ministers and it is left to the choice of the Chief Minister depending upon the necessity of the situation. The appointment of the Deputy Ministers is also made by the Governor but he must exercise his powers after seeking the advice of the Chief Minister.

2.3.4 THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The Council of Ministers is the main executive organ of the Government, and its stability is essential for the efficient running of the administration. In Kashmir the party system is in development and it is reasonable to suppose that the Council of Ministers will become more stable as it develops. Though it is within the discretionary power of the Governor to appoint the Chief Minister of the choice, yet owing to the fundamental principle of parliamentary government that the cabinet must have the confidence of the legislature, this choice by the Governor becomes almost automatic in the sense that he will be obliged to appoint as Chief Minister, the leader of the majority party in the House. This is generally regarded as a convention, but the practice is dictated by the necessity of ensuring continuous stable Government. It is assumed that this practice will be followed in Kashmir. The discretionary power of the Governor may not seem as important if there is a party in the legislature which has an overall majority and whose leader enjoys its confidence; but it becomes critical in a situation where there is no such party and a coalition government is essential. It will then be for the Governor to consider what coalitions are possible and choose that one which is most likely to endure. Once the decision has been taken about who is commanding the confidence of legislature, then Chief Minister and other ministers are appointed by the Governor. The constitution does not lay down how the chief minister will choose his colleagues but owing to the rule of collective responsibility the chief minister will make his council of ministers as broadly representative as possible. He will probably include at least one representative of every region viz Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. He may also appoint a representative of the minority communities viz pundits from Kashmir and include a representative from each of the backward communities, schedule castes and the other minority group viz the Sikhs.

Ministers on appointment need not be a member of the legislature. He can become a member later, either by nomination by the Governor. It is not necessary that the ministers should all be members of the Legislative Assembly but, as Sir Ivor Jennings suggest “the Cabinet has to be a team and not a leading actor with chorus and strength of a team sometimes depends on the weakest member”. It would seem to be in the best interest of the Government to have the majority of the Ministers in the Legislative Assembly, since the ministry is collective responsible to it. Ministers have a right to speak in both House. The allocation of the portfolios is done by the Governor on the advice of the Chief minister and it is he who also makes rules for the more convenient transaction of the business. The salaries and allowances of the minister and deputy ministers have not been laid down in the constitution. But it is provided that they will be governed by the Act of 1956 and the Act of S.2010 respectively. The Ministers hold office at the pleasure of the Governor. Thus, he may, if the necessity arises, dismiss the ministers and the deputy ministers, for the power to appoint presumably includes the power to dismiss and the power to will accordingly to the practice and conventions, be exercised by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister to remove an undesirable member of the council of ministers. The normal method of removal of a minister or the ministry is a vote of no-confidence in the minister in the Legislative Assembly, but it may sometimes happen that, though a minister is otherwise undesirable, he commands the support of the House. The power of dismissal by the Governor might be used in such a case. Though, no doubt, occasions for the exercise of such authority will be rare, yet as Keith observes, it will be impossible to say that changed circumstances might not render the exercise of such authority necessary.

2.3.4.1 Council of Ministers & Dissolution of the House

On the dissolution of the House, the Chief Minister or other members of the Council are not required either to resign nor can they be dismissed by the Government implying that they continue in office on that account only. No fresh order is, therefore, required to be made by, the Governor authorising the Council of ministers to continue in the office.

2.3.4.2 The Chief Minister

The office of the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, like in other states of Indian Union, is recognised by law. The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir provides that there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at its head. Sections 35(1) and 36, when read together, show the real executive is the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister. It is the Chief Minister who is under constitutional obligation to advise the Governor in matters relating to the formation of Ministry, organisation of the working of the Council of Ministers and the dissolution of the Council of Ministers. He may be designated as the working head of the government.

With regard to the formation of ministry, it is the Chief Minister who has the final say in the matter of selection of ministers. It is he who submits the list of the Council of Ministers to the Governor for their appointment as Ministers. The Chief Minister allocates the portfolios among the Ministers. The Governor's acceptance is only a formality. It is the Chief Minister who decides the rank of the members of his Council of Ministers.

Insofar as the organization of the Council of Ministers is concerned, its size is primarily determined by the Chief Minister according to his own discretion. But, in practice, the Chief Minister's discretion may be limited by several factors which are in the nature of political necessities. Thus, while organizing his ministry, the Chief Minister may give priority to provide representation to all the regions of the state. Hence every Council of Ministers must have on it members representing Jammu Province and the frontier area of Ladakh and Kargil. He should also give representation on the Council of Ministers to important minorities such as Kashmiri Pandits and the Sikhs and to backward communities and Scheduled Castes.

The life and death of the Council of Ministers depends upon the will of the Chief Minister. There are several ways for the Chief Minister to dissolve the Council of Ministers. For example, the Chief Minister's resignation should immediately be followed by the resignation of the entire body of Council of Ministers. Also if there may arise any difference on any issue, or on policy matter between the Chief Minister and any other minister, the latter should agree with the views of the Chief Minister, but if the Minister fails to do so, he should resign. This shows how the life and death of the Council of Ministers depends upon the will of the Chief Minister.

As the Chief Executive and head of the Government, the Chief Minister must know full details about the affairs of administration. All decisions regarding important matters are taken only in consultation and with the approval of Chief Minister.

All appointments of higher government officials are made with the approval of the Chief Minister. Even the Governor makes appointment to certain categories of higher officials to the state administration on the advice of Chief Minister.

Under Section 44 of the Constitution, the Chief Minister is required to perform the following duties:

- I. To communicate to the Governor all decisions of the Council of Ministers relating to the administration of the affairs of the State and proposals for legislation.
- II. To furnish such information relating to the administration of the affairs of the State and proposals for legislation as the Governor may call for.
- III. If the Governor requires to submit for the consideration of the Council of Ministers any matter on which a decision has been taken by a Minister but which has not been considered by the Council.

The above three duties imply that the Chief Minister, as the Chief political executive, acts as a link between the Governor and the Council of Ministers.

Being the political head of the civil services, the role of Chief Minister is to conform to certain well established and well defined conventions and norms. Most importantly, a Chief Minister must set a personal example as an eminent, honest, devoted and conscious administrator. He must encourage honest personnel in the administrative set up.

2.3.5 THE STATE LEGISLATURE

The legislature of Jammu and Kashmir State is bicameral. By virtue of her own State Constitution, the state of Jammu and Kashmir has two houses. Hence, it consists of the Governor and two Houses – the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. The upper house is called the Legislative Council and the lower house is known as Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly forms an essential part of the government machine in a country governed on democratic principles and represents the people. Legislative Council does not get

elected directly and represents the mature political opinion of the distinguished political leaders and eminent citizens of the State. This two chamber system is an integral part of Constitution of the State.

2.3.5.1 Legislative Assembly

The members of the Legislative Assembly are directly elected by people from the territorial constituencies in the state. Now, the total strength of the legislative assembly is of 111 members. The Constitution of the State provides that twenty-four seats in the legislative assembly shall remain vacant for those residing in the Pakistan held area (POK) of Jammu and Kashmir. However, there is a provision for nomination under certain conditions. If in the opinion of the Governor women are not adequately represented in the assembly, he may nominate two women to be members thereof. In actual effect, at present the total strength of the legislative assembly is 87 and not 111 because the seats reserved for the people of PoK are not filled.

In addition to the reservation of 24 seats for the people residing in the area of the state of Jammu and Kashmir now under the occupation of Pakistan, the Constitution provides for the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes. This reservation has been made in ratio near to the proportion of the Scheduled Castes in the State. The Scheduled Castes are deemed to mean the castes, races, tribes or groups which under Article 341 of the Indian Constitution are constructed to be so. Thus, Article 341 of the Constitution of India is applicable to Jammu And Kashmir State. The reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes was provided for 23 years from the date the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution became operational, but this period was further extended by another 23 years through amendments.

The Constitution makes it clear that for the purposes of election to the legislative assembly, the state is divided into territorial constituencies in such a manner that the ratio between the population of each constituency and the number of seats allotted to it are, as far as practicable, the same throughout the state.

If the legislative assembly is dissolved prior to the expiry of its duration and the Governor is satisfied that holding of general election without delay is necessary, he may after consulting the Election Commission, by notification direct that the general election shall be held on the basis of the last preceding delimitation of territorial constituencies. The legislative

assembly, unless sooner dissolved, shall continue for six years from the date appointed for its first meeting.

A person shall not be qualified for the membership to the Legislative Assembly unless he is a permanent resident of the state, is of twenty five years of age and makes and subscribes an oath and affirmation before some persons authorized in that behalf by the Election Commission of India according to the form set out for the purpose in the Fifth Schedule.

No person can become a member of both the houses at the same time. In case a person happens to be a member of both houses, he has to vacate his seat in one or the other houses according to law made by the legislature. Besides, a person ceases to be the member of the legislative assembly:

- (i) if he resigns his seat by writing under his hand addressed to the Speaker;
- (ii) If remains absent, without permission of the House, for 60 consecutive days from all the meetings of the House, his seat falls automatically vacant.

2.3.5.2 The Legislative Council

In accordance to the provisions dealing with the State Legislature, the Legislative Council of the State is to consist of 36 indirectly elected members, giving representations to functional groups, local bodies and other unorganized social interests. Of these, eleven members are elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly from amongst the residents of the Kashmir Province who are not members of the Legislative Assembly and at least one each being elected to represent the districts of Ladakh and Kargil tehsil. Eleven members are to be elected by legislative assembly from amongst the residents of Jammu province who are not members of the legislative assembly, at least one each being elected to represent the districts of Doda and Poonch. One member is elected by each of the following constituencies:

- (a) The members of Municipal Council, Town Area Committees and Notified Area Committees in the province of Kashmir.
- (b) The members of Municipal Council, Town Area Committees and Notified Area Committees in the province of Jammu.
- (c) Teachers of Kashmir province, and

(d) Teachers of Jammu province.

Two members shall be elected by each of the following constituencies :

(a) Panchayats and specified local bodies in Kashmir, and

(b) Panchayats and specified local bodies in Jammu.

Eight members are nominated by the Governor, not more than three from amongst persons belonging to the socially or economically backward classes in the state and the rest from amongst those who have distinguished themselves in the fields of literature, science, art, cooperative movement and social services.

The election to the legislative council is held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote under sub-sections (2) and (3) of section 50 which deals with the election of 22 members to be elected by the members of the legislative assembly. None of the sitting members of the legislative assembly is eligible to be elected to the Legislative Council.

The Council unlike the Assembly is not subject to dissolution but one-third of its members retire every two years. Both the Houses are to elect their presiding officers known as Speaker and Deputy Speaker and Chairman and Deputy Chairman respectively.

To be qualified for election to the Legislative Council, a person

(1) must be a permanent resident of the state;

(2) must be not less than thirty years of age;

(3) must make and subscribe the oath or affirmation for election to the Legislative Council;

(4) must possess such other qualifications as may be prescribed in that behalf by or under any law made by the legislature;

(5) must not holds any office of profit under the governments of India or the state government or any other state government within the Union of India;

(6) who is not entitled to become the member of the Legislative Council if he is declared of an unsound mind by a court of law.

2.3.5.3 Summoning of Sessions and Prorogation of The Houses

The Constitution provides that the Governor shall from time to time summon each House of the state legislature to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit. Thus, it is the Governor, who has power to summon the sessions of the houses of the state legislature from time to time. However, the exercise of power of the Governor is conditioned by the requirement that six months must not intervene between the last sitting in one session of the house and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session. There shall not, therefore, be an interval of more than six months between two sessions of a house. The Governor may prorogue from time to time either house of the state legislature which means termination of the session.

2.3.5.4 Legislative Procedure

The law making power is the most important power of the State legislature. This power is exercised in accordance with a set procedure. Such procedure differs according to the nature of the law to be formulated. Thus there is difference in the procedure for passing the ordinary Bill as compared to the money Bill.

Ordinary Bill is neither a money Bill nor a financial Bill nor a Bill involving expenditure from the consolidated fund of the state, is known as Ordinary Bill. It is a Bill relating to matters of ordinary legislation. An ordinary Bill may originate in either House of state legislature. Wherever it originates, it has to go to the other House and must be passed by both the houses.

To become a law, the Bill has to pass through different stages. Though it has to go to both the Houses and get the approval of each of these Houses, the power of both the Houses in this respect is not equal. The power of the Legislative Council with regard to those Bills which are passed by the Legislative Assembly is restricted. If an ordinary Bill passed by the assembly is transmitted to the Council for consideration, the latter may either reject the Bill or can retain the Bill without taking it into consideration, for not more than three months or may pass the Bill with amendments and send the same back to the legislative assembly. The Legislative Assembly may, in the same session or in any subsequent session, pass the bill in its original form or with such amendments as have been made or suggested by the Legislative Council. After the bill has been passed for the second time by the legislative assembly, it is retransmitted to the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council may reject the bill. If more than one month elapse and the

Council has not passed it or if the Council passes the Bill with amendments not agreeable to the assembly, the Bill shall automatically be deemed to have been passed by both the houses of the state legislature in the form in which it was passed by the legislative assembly for the second time with or without such amendments as had been made by the Council and were agreed to by the legislative assembly.

All this means restrictive power of the Legislative Council. It can rarely do more than suggest amendments to bills passed by the lower house. Once the Bill is passed by both the houses of assembly, it is presented to the Governor for his assent. Only then it becomes law.

The difference between the two Houses is also in relation to the pending bills before each of the two Houses. A Bill pending in the legislature does not lapse by reason of the prorogation of the house or houses thereof. A Bill pending in the Legislative Council, which has not been passed by the legislative assembly does not lapse on the dissolution of the assembly, but a Bill which is pending in the legislative assembly or which, having been passed by the legislative assembly, is pending in the Legislative Council, lapses on a dissolution of the assembly.

All this implies that the Legislative Council cannot veto Bills passed by the legislative assembly. The Council can only delay the passage of hasty and ill-considered legislation by the assembly and in some circumstances invokes the judgment of the electorate. The Constitution makes provision for a deadlock between the two chambers by Section 75.

It follows that in respect to a non-money bill, having been passed by the legislative assembly, the legislative council does not have any power except to delay the passing of the bill. The J&K Constitution does not specifically provide for the situation when a Bill, other than a money Bill, which originated in the Legislative Council and having been passed by it, if rejected in the legislative assembly, but it would seem that the assembly's disapproval means the lapse of the Bill.

Money Bill

A Bill which relates to finance or money is called a Money Bill. It is that bill which contains only provisions dealing with all or any of the following matters, namely –

- (1) The imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any Tax;

- (2) The regulation of the borrowing of money or giving of any guarantee by the state or the amendment of the law with respect to any financial obligations undertaken or to be undertaken by the state.
- (3) The custody of the consolidated fund or the contingency fund of the state, the payment of money into or the withdrawal of moneys from any such fund.
- (4) The declaring of any expenditure to be expenditure charged on the consolidated fund of the state or the increasing of the amount of any such expenditure.
- (5) The receipts of money on account of the consolidated fund of the state or the public accounts of the state or the custody of issue of such money; or
- (6) Any matter incidental to any of the matters mentioned in Section 77(1). A money Bill is introduced in the assembly only.

According to the procedure followed in the State, a Bill shall not be deemed to be a money Bill by reason only that it provides for the imposition of fines or other pecuniary penalties or for the demand or payment of fees for licenses or fees for services rendered, or by reason that it provides for the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration, or regulation of any tax by any local authority or body for local purposes.

If any question arises whether a Bill is a money Bill or not, the decision of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly shall be final. A money Bill can be introduced or moved only on the recommendation of the Governor.

Sections 76 and 77 lay down provisions with regard to Money Bill. A money Bill must always originate in the legislative assembly. It cannot be introduced in the legislative council. A Money Bill having been passed by the legislative assembly is transmitted to the legislative council. The Council cannot reject or amend a Money Bill. All that Council can do is to suggest amendments, which the legislative assembly may or may not accept.

The Legislative Council shall return the money bill to the legislative assembly within 14 days from the date of its receipt in the council with its recommendations. If the Assembly accepts any of the recommendations of the Council the Money Bill shall be deemed to have been passed by both houses with the amendments recommended by the Legislative Council and accepted by the Legislative Assembly.

If the legislative assembly does not accept any of the recommendation of the Legislative Council, the money bill shall be deemed to have been passed by both houses in the form in which it was passed by the legislative assembly without any of the amendment recommended by the Legislative Council.

If the Money Bill is not returned by the Legislative Council to the Legislative Assembly within the said period of 14 days, it shall be deemed to have been passed by both houses at the expiration of the said period in the form in which it was passed by the Legislative Assembly. It thus follows that with respect to a Money Bill, the Legislative Council does not have any power but only to delay the passing of the bill by 14 days.

2.3.5.5 Procedure in Financial Matters

The Governor causes to be laid before the state legislature the “Annual financial statement” showing the estimates of receipts and expenditure of the government, generally known as Budget for every financial year. It is in two parts. The first Part, which is open in discussion in the legislature but which is not subject to vote, deals with matters charged on the consolidated fund of the state and covers –

- (a) the emoluments and allowances of the Governor and other expenditure relating to his office;
- (b) the salaries and allowances of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Council;
- (c) debt charges for which the state is liable including interest, sinking fund charges and redemption charges, and other expenditure relating to the raising of loans and the service and redemption of debts;
- (d) expenditure in respect of the salaries and allowances of the judges of the High Court;
- (e) any sums required to satisfy and judgment decree or award of any court or arbitral tribunal; and
- (f) any other expenditure declared by this Constitution or by legislature to be so charged.

The second Part of the statement contains demand for grants to meet anticipated expenditure. These may be assented to, refused or reduced by the legislature but may not be increased. A demand for grant can be made only on the recommendation of the Governor. The annual appropriation Bill is necessary to authorize payment of money out of the consolidated fund. Substantially the same principles apply to acts passed to provide supplementary grants during the year, votes on account, votes of credit and other legislative authority for the appropriation of money out of the consolidated fund. They must be introduced in the Legislative Council and on the recommendations of the Governor.

2.3.6 JUDICIARY

The judiciary in Jammu and Kashmir acts as the interpreter and guardian of the Constitution. It is a key organ of the government of the State. Like the judiciary elsewhere in the country, the judiciary in this state has to act as an independent and impartial agency that has the important role of acting as a watchdog. Originally, the Judiciary in the state derived its power from the Constitution Act of 1939. The structure followed by the Judiciary after 1939 was continued even after 1947. In the State of Jammu and Kashmir, after the making of the Constitution of the State in the middle of fifties, the structure and powers of the Judiciary were drawn by this constitution. Despite its composition and powers being drawn from the state constitution, the structure of judiciary does not differ much from that of other states of India.

2.3.6.1 Judiciary in Jammu And Kashmir - Historical Development

The Judiciary in the modern context had taken shape in the state of Jammu and Kashmir during the time of the Dogra rule itself. The first High Court was established in March 1928. At that time, it comprised of a Chief Justice and two Prime judges and was called 'The High Court of judicature Jammu and Kashmir State'. This was the highest judicial body in the state within the limited framework of monarchy. Despite its modern nature, it was not fully autonomous. The control of the monarch continued as appeal from it lay to him.

With the framing of the Constitution Act of 1939, that was enacted by the Dogra ruler as a result of the pressure of the popular movement in the State, the High Court was institutionalised as an essential part of the government. Part IV of the Constitution Act, 1939,

dealt with the judicature. Section 48 of the Act contained provisions with regard to the High Court

2.3.6.2 Judiciary in The Post-Independence Period

The Judiciary in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, like judiciary in other states of India evolved as an impartial and independent institution in the post-independence period. However, there remained a basic difference in the structure of the Judiciary in this State as compared to the judiciary in other States. Governed by Article 370 of the Constitution of India, this State was to have its own internal governmental arrangement, while other states of India were to be governed by the common provisions relating to the governance of the States under the Constitution of India.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir therefore was not governed by the Entry 78 of List I of Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India that deals with the exclusive power of the Union Parliament to legislate on the Constitution and organization of the High Courts in the states. Under the Presidential Order of 1950 that defined the nature of application of the Constitution of India to this state, this provision of the Constitution of India was not exercisable with regard to Jammu and Kashmir. The composition and organization of the High Court was within the exclusive jurisdiction of the State. The High Court of the State therefore continued working under the Constitution Act of 1939.

Despite its being governed by the local Act, the High Court of the State of Jammu and Kashmir was integrated to a very limited extent within the federal nature of the judiciary in India. Articles 131 and 132 of the Constitution of India, dealing with the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of India was applicable to this state. Similarly, the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court on constitutional questions was also applied to this state. Other than this, the Supreme Court had no other jurisdiction in the state.

In 1957, the constitution of the State came into force. With this constitution in place, the Judiciary came to be governed by this Constitution.

2.3.6.3 Composition of the High Court, Appointment and Removal of Judges

The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir, to begin with consisted of a Chief Justice and two or more other judges. The Constitution did not fix any maximum number of judges, but provided that the minimum number of judges of the High Court, excluding the Chief Justice at any time, will be two. The present strength of the High Court is eight permanent (including Chief Justice) and six additional judges.

According to the procedure followed now, the appointment of the judges of the High Court is made by the President of India. He, however, consults the following persons in the matter:

- (a) Chief Justice of India;
- (b) The Governor of the State
- (c) Chief Justice of the High Court of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

In case of the appointment of the Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir, only (a) and (b) are to be consulted. The judges hold office until they attain the age of sixty two years. A candidate for appointment must have at least ten years of judicial experience in the State or in any other part of India, or have been an advocate of High Court of Kashmir or of any other High Court in India or of two or more such Courts in succession. A judge of the High Court may resign his office by writing under his hand addressed to the President of India. A judge of the High Court could be removed by an order of the President of India.

To begin with, the power of removal of Judges of the High Court lay in the legislature of the State. This was a power equivalent to the power of the Parliament to impeach the Judges. A judge of the High Court of this state could be impeached by the state legislature in accordance to the provision laid down in the Constitution. The Constitution of the State provided that a Judge could be removed by an order of the President of India after an address for his removal supported by a two-thirds majority has been passed by each House of the State legislature on the grounds of “proved misbehaviour or incapacity”. But this provision has been repealed by the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir (First Amendment) Act, 1959. By C.O. 60, the removal of the judges of the State High Court can only be made after an address for their removal has been passed by Parliament of India and presented to the President in accordance with article 124(4) of the Constitution of India.

The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir did not contain any provision with regard to the transfer of judges from or to the Kashmir High Court nor did the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954 contain any such provision. But because the judiciary of the state was being integrated with the rest of India, it was felt that such a provision was necessary. Accordingly, Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Amendment Order, 1960, made Article 222 of the Constitution of India, which deals with the transfer of judges from a High Court to the other Courts in India, applicable to Jammu and Kashmir with effect from 26.1.1960, but with following condition. Every such transfer from the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir or to that High Court shall be made after consultations with the Governor.

So now there is a provision that the President of India may, in consultations with Governor, order the transfer of judges from or to the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir.

Section 106 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir barred judges of the High Court, who had held office after the commencement of the Constitution from practicing before any Court or authority in the State.

Judges of the High Court enjoy the same immunity as the judges of the Supreme Court of India. No action lies against a judge for any acts done or words spoken in his capacity as a judge. “It is essential on all courts that the judges who are appointed to administer the law should be permitted to administer it under the protection of the law independently and freely, without favour and without fear. This provision of the law is not for the benefit of a malicious or a corrupt judge, but for the benefit of the public, whose interest it is that judges shall be at liberty to exercise their functions with independence and without fear of consequences.”

2.3.6.4 High Court – Court of Record

Section 94 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir declares:

The High Court shall be a Court of record and shall have all the powers of such Court including the power to punish for contempt of itself, or of the Courts subordinate to it. Under this Section it has been provided that State High Court is empowered to “punish for contempt of itself or of Court subordinate to it”.

Thus, contempt proceedings come under the original jurisdiction of the High Court. Contempt of Court is of two types :

- (a) Civil, e.g., failure to comply with an order or undertaking;
- (b) Criminal.

There is further division of contempt for acts committed in court or out of court:

- (i) in Court : this includes unruly behaviour; interference with proceedings; refusal to obey presiding officer; speaking disrespectfully of judge or jury;
- (ii) out of Court : this includes the interference with the course of justice, e.g., intimidating a party; corrupting a witness, its officers and commenting on pending proceeding so as to prejudice trial.

2.3.6.5 Jurisdiction of The High Court

Original, Appellate and Revisional Jurisdiction of The High Court:

Section 102 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir enacts that subject to the provisions of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir and to the provisions of any law in force for the time being, laws administered in the High Court shall be the same as immediately before the commencement of the Constitution. This applies to statutes, precedents, customs, usage and personal laws. The jurisdiction of the High Court therefore, was originally governed by the Constitution Act of 1939.

Section 56 of the Constitution Act, 1939 dealt with the jurisdiction of the High Court. It contained provisions with regard to the original, appellate and revisional jurisdictions of the High Court. This Section 56(2) reads: “The High Court shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine any suit worth rupees twenty thousand and every such suit or proceeding shall be instituted in the High Court. After the enforcement of the 1957 Constitution, this jurisdiction of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir was further extended to any suit or proceeding of value of twenty thousand rupees or over”.

The high Court has jurisdiction to entertain and dispose of such appeals, revisions and cases, civil, criminal and revenue, as it may be empowered to do under any enactment in force in

the state. Appeals from the lower courts lie to the High Court and the procedure for filing these appeals is probably contained in the letters dated of September 10, 1943.

The High Courts also enjoy the power to issue certain writs. Section 103 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir deals with powers of the state High Court to issue writs, orders, directions, etc. for any purpose other than those mentioned in article 32(2A) of the Constitution of India. The combined effect of Section 103 of the Constitution of Kashmir and Article 32(2A) of the Constitution of India is that the High Court of Kashmir has the power to issue writs etc. (a) for the purposes of the enforcement of the fundamental rights and (b) for any other purpose.

2.3.6.6 Supervisory Jurisdiction

The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir is vested with administrative and judicial supervisory jurisdiction over all the Courts subordinate to it. In this capacity, the High Court is vested with the power of superintendence and control “over all courts for the time being subject to its appellate or revisional jurisdiction and all such courts shall be subordinate to the High Court”. The court may a) call for returns from such Courts; b) make and issue general rules for regulating the practice any proceedings from such Courts; c) prescribe forms in which books, entries and accounts are kept by the officers of any such Court; and d) settle table of fees of the staff, clerks, officers, attorneys and advocates of such Courts.

2.3.7. THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR REORGANISATION ACT 2019: FROM STATE TO UNION TERRITORY

On 5 August 2019, the President of India issued a Presidential Order, The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019 under Article 370 making all the provisions of Constitution of India applicable to the State of Jammu and Kashmir and this has rendered the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir infructuous from that date. Now the Constitution of India is applicable to Jammu and Kashmir, like all other Indian states. Accordingly, many changes have been brought to the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

2.3.7.1 Constitutional Structure

On and from the appointed day, the provisions contained in article 239A, which are applicable to “Union territory of Puducherry”, shall also apply to the “Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir”. Hence, the Union Territory with legislative body of Jammu and Kashmir resembles the same features and provisions of the Pondicherry. The Administrator appointed under article 239 of the Constitution of India for the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir called as Lieutenant Governor.

The Lieutenant Governor carries all the functions that were earlier carried out by the Governor of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. In fact, the Lieutenant Governor carries more executive authority than the earlier Governor because certain subjects, particularly the Law and Order, are no more in the jurisdiction of the State government.

The total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly for the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir are 107; these are filled by persons chosen by direct election, out of which 24 are located in the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. A delimitation commission will be constituted to determine the Assembly constitutions as per the census records. Some of the seats in the Legislative assembly will be reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as per their proportion in the population. The Legislative Assembly, unless sooner dissolved, shall continue for five years from the date appointed for its first meeting and no longer, and the expiration of the said period of five years shall operate as a dissolution of the Legislative Assembly.

If any provision of a law made by the Legislative Assembly with respect to matters enumerated in the State List, in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution is repugnant to any provision of a law made by Parliament with respect to that matter, whether passed before or after the law made by the Legislative Assembly, or, if any provision of a law made by the Legislative Assembly with respect to any matter enumerated in the Concurrent List in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution is repugnant to any provision of any earlier law, other than a law made by the Legislative Assembly, with respect to that matter, then, in either case, the law made by Parliament, or, as the case may be, such earlier law shall prevail and the law made by the Legislative Assembly of the Union territory shall, to the extent of the repugnancy, be void. However, nothing in this section shall prevent Parliament from enacting at any time any law

with respect to the same matter including a law adding to, amending, varying or repealing the law so made by the Legislative Assembly.

The new Act states that the Council of Ministers should not be more than ten percent of the total number of members in the Legislative Assembly, with the Chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Lieutenant Governor in the exercise of his functions in relation to matters with respect to which the Legislative Assembly has power to make laws.

With regard to the Judiciary, not much has changed in the new Act. The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir shall be the common High Court for the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Union territory of Ladakh. The Judges of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir for the existing State of Jammu and Kashmir holding office immediately before the appointed day shall become on that day the Judges of the common High Court.) The expenditure in respect of salaries and allowances of the Judges of the common High Court shall be allocated amongst the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Union territory of Ladakh on the basis of population ratio.

2.3.8 EXERCISE

- 1 Briefly explain the composition of the legislature in Jammu and Kashmir.
- 2 Write a note on the powers and functions of the executive in the State.
- 3 Analyse the composition and jurisdiction of the High Court in Jammu and Kashmir

2.4 LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT: WORKING OF PRI

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

2.4.0 Objectives

2.4.1 Introduction

2.4.2 PRIs in Jammu and Kashmir

2.4.3 Panchayat Raj Act of 1989: Main Features

2.4.3.1 Halqa Panchayats

2.4.3.2 Block Development Council

2.4.3.3 District Planning and Development Board

2.4.4 Limitations of the Panchayat Raj Act 1989

2.4.4.1 Structural Problems

2.4.4.2 Operational Problems

2.4.5 Corrective Measures

2.4.6 The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act and Panchayats

2.4.7 Let Us Sum UP

2.4.8 Exercise

2.4.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson focuses on Panchayat Raj Institutions of Jammu and Kashmir, their status and functioning. The lesson also explains recent developments in the state to bring PRIs on par with the 73rd Amendment. After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- the historical background of Panchayat system in Jammu and Kashmir;
- Main features of the Panchayat Act of 1989 and its limitations both structural and operational;

- The recent corrective measures initiated by State Government to bring PRIs of Jammu and Kashmir on par with 73rd Constitutional Amendment of Government of India.

2.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The institutions of Panchayat have become key institutions for democratisation of politics in India. They have been empowered by the 73rd Amendment Act of the Constitution of India to act as the most important instruments of power of the people at the grass roots level. It is through this Act that there is said to have taken a silent revolution as the principle of reservation for the marginal sections of society including the Scheduled Castes and Tribes as well as women has institutionalised the participation of these people in the democratic decision making process. The State of Jammu and Kashmir has still to bring itself at par with the rest of India in adopting the 73rd Amendment Act but it has its own Panchayat Raj Act that was formulated in 1989. The gap between this Act and the 73rd Amendment Act is gradually being sought to be filled up.

2.4.2 PRIS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The State of Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a radicalized political environment in the third and fourth decade of the 20th century. It was with the formation of the Muslim Conference in 1932 that the process of politicization of Kashmiris was initiated. The politics of the Muslim Conference however was limited to the demand of the middle class Muslims of the state specifically in relation to the issues of education and job opportunities. In 1938 under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, this party resolved to dissolve itself and reorganized itself into a secular and more broad based party. The new party known as the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference was to become the most important indigenous political organization of Kashmir well entrenched in the mass of Kashmiris mainly comprised of the peasantry and the artisans. The formation of this party set the stage for adoption of some of the most progressive ideals for the political movement in Kashmir. These ideals incorporated into the New Kashmir Manifesto were to become the basis for reorganization and reconstruction of the polity and the economy of the state. The cherished goal of this Manifesto was the “all-sided advance” of Kashmir along the all the avenues of the human activity regulated in a democratic manner.

The constitution structure of the state as envisaged by the New Kashmir Manifesto was to be based on democratic principle of responsible government with the elective principle applied from the local Panchayats right up to national assembly. Article 17 of the Manifesto provided that the political power shall be equitably distributed among the regions of state and would be further decentralized at lower level like districts, blocks, panchayats. The appropriate institution elected by the people shall be set up at the respective levels to exercise political power that may be delegated to them.

Besides the goal of institutionalization of democratic structure of the state with emphasis on the principle of dispersion of power and popular participation, the New Kashmir Manifesto also envisaged the goal of economic justice. It was in accordance with this goal that the state went in for the most progressive measures including land reforms of the most radical nature. These measures included, abolishing absentee landlordism and granting ownership of the land to the actual tiller, liquidation of old debts of impoverished people amounting to millions of rupees. Subsidizing and financing cottage industries and small scale manufacturing units. By providing generous state loan on easy terms for rural activities through cooperatives, the state initiated the cooperative movement by mid sixties.

While economic agenda of the New Kashmir Manifesto was thus being pursued vigorously in the immediate post independence period, the agenda of democratic decentralization and the grassroots participation had to be postponed till the process of making of the Constitution of the State was complete. It was in 1957 that the Constitution of J&K came into force. This Constitution clearly reiterated the commitment of the state to pursue the ideals and objectives of the freedom movement envisaged in the New Kashmir Manifesto and committed the state to take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government. It was in pursuance of this commitment that the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayats Act was enacted in 1958.

However, the commitment to pursue the goals of decentralized power structure through the institutions of Panchayat met almost the similar fate as other principles contained in the New Kashmir Manifesto. The political development in the decades of fifties and sixties led to sufficient distortion in the state politics with the result that the political vision of New Kashmir

was completely sidelined, though the political ethos generated by it was to continue showing its impact for quite some time.

The institution of Panchayat suffered from the overall malaise affecting the politics of Jammu and Kashmir. One part of the malaise that overtook the state in general and the valley of Kashmir in particular is related to the failure of democratic forces in the state. Institutionalization of democracy was seriously affected as politics of Jammu and Kashmir was dominated by one set of political elite without any scope for articulation of discontent, dissent or opposition.

Notwithstanding the ineffective implementation of Panchayat Raj Act of 1958, the idea of Panchayati Raj continued to inspire the National Conference leadership and in the decade of eighties an attempt was made to revive the Panchayati Raj institutions in the state and bring them at par with some of the more effective Panchayati Raj Acts operational in states like Karnataka. It was in pursuance of this goal that a new Panchayati Raj Act was approved by the state legislature in 1989. This Act could not be made effective immediately due to the onset of militancy and the breakdown of the political order. The laws, regulations and the rules that needed to be formulated to make this act functional could not be drafted till 1997.

2.4.3 PANCHAYAT RAJ ACT OF 1989 – MAIN FEATURES

The basic structure of the Panchayats in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is almost similar to other states of India. It adopted a three-tier system. The lowest level Panchayats are called “Halqa Panchayats” and the intermediate Panchayats are called “Block Development Councils” and at the district level the Panchayats are called as “District Planning and Development Boards”.

2.4.3.1 Halqa Panchayats

The Halqa Panchayats (the lower tier) are constituted on the basis of geographical congruity and population. The population of each Halqa Panchayat is restricted to 4000 in plain area and 3500 in hilly areas. The Sarpanch and Panches are elected to the office in a direct election for a period of five years. Those who are below 25 years of age are not eligible to contest either as Sarpanch or Panches. The Panchayat Fund, which is essential to carryout the responsibilities, mainly

comprises of the State Govt. grants and resources mobilized internally through taxes and fees. The function of Panchayats, like in any other state, is basically to prepare and implement the plans for development.

2.4.3.2 Block Development Council

The Block Development Council (Middle tier) comprises of a Chairperson, all the Sarpanches of Halqa Panchayats and Chairperson of the Marketing Society. The Chairperson is elected in an indirect election. An Electoral College comprising of Panches and Sarpanches of Halqa Panchayats in a Block elects one among themselves as a Chairperson to the Block Development Council for a period of five years. The main functions of Block Development Council are the construction, maintenance and supervision of inter-Halqa Panchayat communication system, administrative and technical guidance to Halqa Panchayats and review of their work and supervising various developmental programmes.

2.4.3.3 District Planning and Development Board

It is a primary policy-making body. It is a broader representative organization having a Chairperson (the State Government's nominee), Chairpersons of the Block Development Councils, MPs and MLAs of the District, Chairman of the Town Area Committees and President of the Municipal Councils. The District Boards function as a working group for formulation of periodic and annual plans and to formulate and finalize the plan and non-plan budget for the District.

To provide a clear understanding on the structural aspects of Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat Raj institutions, the main features have been summarized in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Structure and Administration of Panchayats

	HALQA PANCHAYATS	BLOCK DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL	DISTRICT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARDS
Population	Maximum of 3000 in hilly areas and 4500 in plain areas	Population of the whole Block determined by the government	Population of the whole district
Members	Sarpanch and Panches (not less than seven and not more than eleven)	- A Chairperson - All Sarpanches of Halqa Panchayats -Chairperson, Marketing Society of Block	- A Chairperson - Chairpersons of the Block Development Councils - MPs and MLAs of the District -Chairman of the Town Area Committees - Presidents of the Municipal Councils
Age limit for Members	25	25	25
Head of the Institution	Sarpanch	Chairperson	Chairperson
Election of the Head	Direct	Indirect (An electoral college comprising of Panches and Sarpanches of Halqa Panchayats in the Block elects one among them)	Nominated by the Government from amongst the members of the District Planning and Development Board
Election Authority	Chief Electoral Officer	Chief Electoral Officer	n.a.
Term of Office	Five years	Five years	Five years
Removal of Head of the Institution	No Confidence resolution passed by 2/3 rd members	No Confidence resolution passed by 2/3 rd members	n.a.
Remuneration to the Members	Honorarium specified by government	Government prescribes honorarium for Chairperson and Sitting Fee for members	Not specified in the Act

Table 2: Powers and Functions of the Panchayats

HALQA PANCHAYATS	BLOCK DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS	DISTRICT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARDS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To prepare plans for the development of the Halqa. 2. To undertake measures for the implementation of the development plans. 3. To specifically deal with the problems of soil conservation, water management, social forestry, rural industrialization, agriculture, sheep and animal husbandry, sanitation, health and other welfare programmes. 4. Regulation of buildings, ships and entertainment houses and checking of offensive or dangerous trades. 5. Construction and maintenance of slaughter houses, regulation of sale and preservation of meat and processing of skins and hides. 6. Regulation of sale and preservation of fish, vegetables and other perishable articles and food. 7. Regulation of fairs and festivals. 8. Involvement in the implementation of universalization of elementary education and other educational programmes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constructions, maintenance and supervision of inter-Halqa Panchayat Communication system. 2. Administrative and technical guidance to Halqa Panchayats and review of their work. 3. Supervise plans relating to agriculture, rural development, animal husbandry, social forestry, education and public health. 4. Supervise and monitor poverty alleviation programmes and various developmental programmes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider and guide the formulation of development programmes for the District and indicate priorities for various schemes and consider issues relating to the speedy development and economic upliftment of the District. 2. To review periodically progress and achievements of developmental plans and schemes and make recommendations as it considers appropriate. 3. To function as a working group for formulation of periodic and annual plans for the District. 4. To formulate and finalize the plan and non-plan budget for the District. 5. To lay down the policy guidelines for the Block Development Council and Halqa Panchayat. 6. To approve the budget of the Block Development Council and supervise and coordinate their work. 7. To undertake special measures for alleviating poverty and employment generation and extending assistance to Halqa Panchayats in this behalf. 8. To promote and assist cooperative institutions.

2.4.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE PANCHAYAT RAJ ACT OF 1989

The Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act of 1989 cannot in any way boast of either providing a formula for decentralizing power or for providing democratic environment at the

level of the grassroots. When compared with the provisions of the Indian Constitution dealing with the Panchayats, specifically after the 73rd amendment, the State Act appears to be quite retrograde. One of the greatest flaws of the Act relates to the governmental intervention in the composition of Panchayats. Unlike the 73rd Amendment of Constitution of India that provides that, “all the seats in the Panchayats shall be filled by persons chosen by direct election from territorial constituencies in the Panchayats, The Jammu and Kashmir Act provides for the principle for nominations at every level – the Halqa (village) Panchayat, the Block Development Council and the District Planning and Development Board. In fact, it is only at the level of Halqa Panchayat that the principle of direct elections is applied. However, even here there is the provision for nomination. Ironically this provision aims at compensating another very critical flaw of the Act – its inability to provide for the reservation of seats for women and the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and other backward communities. Unlike the 73rd Amendment Act, that provides for the reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population and reservation of 33 per cent seats for women through the direct election, the state Act empowers the governmental authorities to nominate women and members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to the Panchayats.

The principle of nomination not merely goes against the logic of maintaining the democratic nature of Panchayats but it also changes the nature of rights enjoyed by the nominated members of Panchayats. Representation to women and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Panchayats in Jammu and Kashmir is discretion of the state government and it is not a constitutional right for any of these groups. In fact, this discretion can be easily used to influence the autonomous nature of the working of Panchayat. The nominated women members, for instance, rather than representing women’s interest, may represent the interest of the government in the Panchayats.

Lack of financial autonomy of the Panchayats is another major weakness of the State Act. There is no provision for autonomous machinery for allocation of funds to the Panchayati institutions, which might adversely affect the financial status. This is unlike the provisions of Indian Constitution related to the Panchayats which have made it obligatory for every state to have a Finance Commission to suggest the principle which should govern the distribution between the state and the panchayats of the net proceeds of the taxes, duties, tolls and fees

leviable by the state as well as to determine the principles of the grants-in-aid to the panchayats from the consolidated fund of the state.

Some of the major problems the Panchayat Raj Institutions of the Jammu and Kashmir facing are analysed in an orderly manner.

2.4.4.1 Structural Problems

Structurally, the Panchayati Raj Act 1989, despite the recent amendments, remains flawed and does not serve the purpose of making the Panchayats as units of self-governance. The main flaws of the Act from a gender perspective are as under:

1. The Panchayats, as per the State Act, are not democratically structured at all the three levels. The principle of direct election of the Panchayat, for instance, is applied only at the village level, neither the Block level Panchayat nor the District level Panchayat is comprised of the directly elected representatives of the people and hence women as margins are at the receiving end.
2. It is only the Chairman of the Block Development Council who can be elected but the process of election is not direct but indirect—the Electoral College comprises of the Panches and Sarpanches within that block. The election for the same is yet to take place in the State. Similarly there is no provision for direct election in the District Planning and Development Board. It is only the Vice-Chairperson of the Board who is elected, the Electoral College being comprised of the members of the Board itself.
3. Presence of the government officials at all three levels hampers the democratic structuring of the Panchayat. The Secretary, Panchayat at all the three levels is a government official: the Gram Sevak at the level of the Halqa Panchayat, the Block Development Officer at the Block Development Council level and the Deputy Commissioner at the level of District Planning and Development Board. Besides the Secretary, the Chairperson of the District Planning and Development Board is also a nominee of the government. As per the practice, the government generally nominates a senior Minister to be the chairperson of the Board. The meeting of the Board is attended by many senior Ministers, including the Chief Minister and senior bureaucrats. The presence of such high powered government officials and Ministers cannot in any case allow the Panchayat at this level to

be a democratic body autonomous of governmental control and influence. True, most Gram Sevaks are women but they are government servants and not elected representatives.

4. The structure of the District Planning and Development Board is more in line with the Single Line Administration system (where the district is the unit of administration) that was introduced in the State in the mid-seventies of the last century rather than in line with the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Under the scheme of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, the idea of decentralised planning remains incomplete without its democratic structuring and content.
5. The Halqa Majlis, which is the foundation of local self-governance, has not been recognised as an institution in the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat Act. A good thing about the Act is that it makes it mandatory for the Halqa Panchayats to 'lay for sanction' its plans and budget to a 'meeting of voters'. However, this 'meeting of voters' and its mode of functioning have not been clearly defined. Also the Act does not state whether the recommendations given by the Halqa Majlis are binding legally and cannot be tampered with.
6. Women's reservation in the Act was limited to the level of Panches and was not extended to the level of Sarpanches. It was further specified only at the level of Village Panchayat and not at the other two levels.
7. The Gram Sabha (Village Assembly), which should have been the most powerful body demanding accountability from the Panches and Sarpanches, remains subordinate to the Panchayat. Gram Sabah is conducted once in a blue moon and that too by some Panchayats only. The meetings of the Village Assembly could have helped in cultivating the debating skills of women and creating role models.

2.4.4.2 Operational Problems

1. At the operational level, the biggest issue remains the powerlessness of the Panchayat. There are pronouncements regarding devolution of powers and empowerment of the Panchayat, and yet, the Panchayats remain without power. However, this is an all-India problem as pointed out by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission. The

Commission has noted the reluctance of State governments and the bureaucracy to let the PRIs become independent self-governing entities in accordance with the principle of subsidiary, which states that any activity that can be done at a lower level should not be delegated to a higher level. The ARC report blames the skewed concentration of political power at the higher levels for the prevailing sorry state of affairs.

2. The absence of funding should not have been a problem in view of the provisions in 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992. The J&K Government can be asked to take a cue from the above stipulation. But there is a more intricate problem which needs to be hammered out. The fact is that State governments are starved of funds due to the imbalances in the Indian fiscal federal system tilted towards the Union Government. So State governments are reluctant to give away their meagre resources to the Panchayats. In Jammu and Kashmir, as in the case of other States, the only funding that is available to the Panchayats is tied with some Centrally sponsored schemes. Other than that, neither are the Panchayats provided basic funding by the State nor are these directly empowered to raise their resources through taxation even though the power of taxation is detailed in the Act.
3. The mere devolution of funds by itself will not result in improvements in the functioning of the Halqa Panchayats. Equally important is the need to build the capacities of elected representatives to handle these funds, plan and implement programmes in Halqa Panchayats. In most States the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MOPR) has taken up the initiative to train the elected representatives and instituted reward schemes to promote devolution. The MOPR reports do indicate the significance of capacity-building of elected Panches. The first statement of panchayat report (2006-2007) thus notes: a big bang approach was recommended for overcoming the sluggishness in the devolution of functions, functionaries and funds (3Fs) to the PRIs. The logic was that if substantial functions, functionaries and funds were devolved at one go with accompanying investment in capacity building and training of staff and elected representatives to handle the greatly increased responsibilities, then this big-bang would blow away much of the inertia and inexperience that were proving to be the major hurdle. The success of PRIs in Kerala where this approach was first followed was held up as an example.

4. Overlapping of functions and powers between the administrative and field agencies under the control of the State Government and the Panchayats is also an issue to be sorted out. The PRIs in the State are not structured on the basis of federal principles. The principle of devolution of powers between the State and Panchayat is not reflected in the Act in any manner. The Act provides the powers of the three tiers of the Panchayat, but it does not in any case guarantee that there is no overlapping of functions and powers between the administrative and field agencies under the control of the State Government and the Panchayats. The PRIs should be planning and implementing their own work at their level, but this comes into conflict with the centralised top-down administrative and planning process.
5. The issue of honorarium to Panches and Sarpanches is still not resolved. The government announcement made any number of times—that the Sarpanch will get an honorarium of Rs 2000 and Panch Rs 1000 per month respectively—has not been implemented till date. In the above mentioned Panchayat Conference, held at Kashmir University, we heard many women Panches voice their demand for it not as an employment package but as a cushion to face odds in an otherwise extraordinary political situation in Kashmir. This is also thought to be necessary to curb lower level corruption in development schemes executed at the Panchayat level where a nexus has emerged between Panches, contractors and lower functionaries of the Rural Development Departments.

2.4.6 CORRECTIVE MEASURES

One of the most positive developments in recent period with regard to PRIs is that the State Government could conduct the elections to most of the PRIs in the state in 2011 despite the threat from militancy. These elections assumed huge local and national importance and women's participation added a critical dimension to it. Panchayat elections were held in a State which saw violence and the decline of both social and political institutions and consequent elimination of social capital. The women are still at the receiving end as many reports documented the impact of violence on women and their placement in the society. Second, the elections were held at a time when the political discourse was dominated by issues of devolution, autonomy and self-rule in the State as means of conflict resolution and conceding it at the lower level only disappointed

many important stakeholders. Further, the elections were held in an atmosphere of fear as violence saw many political workers being killed in elections to the State Legislature in 1996, 2002 and 2008. Though the elections to the Panchayat were held on non-party basis, yet political parties cleverly fielded proxy candidates to control the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The fact that many Panchayat members were killed may partly be the reason that their political affiliations became noticeable.

Secondly, the gender dimension was brought into the local governance system and women were elected to the grassroots level democracy in J&K in 2011. Women's participation in the Panchayat elections started shaking up the political culture of the State. Women-related issues were agitated at the bottom level. The number of women Panches and Sarpanches gives an idea about the evolving women-friendly and emancipating Panchayat politics in the State and its defined future. It is as yet premature to assess the extent to which power has been bestowed upon women through the PRIs, as not much power has been devolved to the Panchayats and only 0.70 per cent women Sarpanches getting elected is an indicator of the nature of politics at the grossroot level. The reservations of seats for women at all levels of PRIs improve the situation.

Thirdly, less than a month after successful completion of panchayat elections in Jammu and Kashmir, the government-appointed committee on devolution of powers to the three-tier Panchayati Raj system has submitted its report to the state government. The report contains recommendations on devolution of functions and quantum of funds to the Panchayati Raj institutions, issues related with personnel and human resources, changes in the composition of District Development Board, powers and functions of Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of District Planning and Development Boards, strengthening the Rural Development department and amendments required in the J&K Panchayati Raj Act of 1989.

Fourthly, and most importantly, the Jammu and Kashmir cabinet headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah decided to accept the recommendations of the above committee and incorporate important provisions of the 73rd constitutional amendment in the state's Panchayati Raj Act to empower elected village representatives in September 2011. The state will now have a separate finance and election commission besides ensuring reservations for women and weaker sections of the society in panchayats across the state. The amendment also makes holding of the panchayat elections mandatory every five years. After the amendment is incorporated by the

state legislature, chairmen of block development councils and district development and planning boards would have to be elected by the panches and sarpanches. The cabinet also approved to delegate functions 14 departments to Panchayats, Agriculture, Education, Health, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution System, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, Horticulture, Revenue, Social Welfare, Fisheries, Forest and Industries and Commerce.

Finally, to amend the Panchayat Raj Act 1989 to incorporate above mentioned changes, six bills are passed by JK Legislature in March 2014.

2.4.7 THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR REORGANISATION ACT 2019: IMPLICATIONS FOR PANCHAYATS

Ever since the modifications to Article 370 and the reorganisations of the Jammu and Kashmir into Union Territory, the governments at Centre as well as State are giving enough indication to introduce structural reforms to Panchayat Raj Institutions to make them on par with rest of India and enable them to function as institutions of local governance. The Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu in 04 December 2019 said that the government was committed to empower grass-roots institutions in the Union Territory. The government is working to effectively implement 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Panchayati Raj Act to empower Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), which will further strengthen the democratic set up at the grass-roots level. Murumu stated that the PRIs will be devolved with sufficient financial resources so that enable them come up to the expectations of the people.

The government conducted the maiden Block Development Council (BDC) election in Jammu and Kashmir in October 2019. It has declared that the election has witnessed a record 98.3 per cent turnout. However, some of the major political parties in the Union Territory, Congress, National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) boycotting the first electoral exercise after the abrogation of the state's special status. The polls are conducted to elect chairpersons of BDCs in 310 blocks in the state and 1,092 candidates were in the fray, of whom 27 were elected unopposed. When results are declared, 217 independent candidates were elected to the post of chairperson in the Block Development Council (BDC) elections in Jammu and Kashmir, with the BJP winning in 81 of the 310 blocks. The National Panthers Party elected in another 8 constituencies.

The panches and sarpanches who elected to the village panchayats during the last quarter of the 2018 are elected the representative for this middle tier of the panchayats, that is Blocs, in the elections held in October 2018.

However, the elections held in 2018 to the village panchayats and 2019 to the Block Panchayats do not solve the problems faced by the PRIs in Jammu and Kashmir. Two structural aspects have to witness a drastic change to their meaningful functions. First and foremost, all aspects of violence have to be reduced the representatives of the panchayats to carry their functions without fear and stress. Second, all the provisions in the 73rd and 74th amendments must be applied to PRIs and sufficient functions and funds have to be transferred to these bodies. Without these steps it is very difficult for the PRIs to function as institutions of local governance.

2.4.8 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson, we have studied the functioning of Panchayati Raj System in Jammu and Kashmir. Like all other institutions of governance, the PRIs in Jammu and Kashmir also suffering due to prevailing political situation in the state. For long time, due to militancy the PRIs have become defunct. The PRIs of the Jammu and Kashmir missed the bus of devolution which has gained great momentum in rest of the country with the passage of 73rd Amendment and with the reservations of the seats for weaker sections particularly, women, dalits and tribals. Though elections were seriously conducted in 2011, still due to lack of reservations for these weaker sections the democratic revolution which we can see elsewhere is missing in the state. Similarly, lack of devolution of funds and functions is also hurting the Panchats very seriously. The state government off late has initiated corrective measures by appointing a high level committee to amend the Panchayat Raj Act. The committee has recommended for more devolution and state government duly agreed and passed five bills in state legislature in 2014. As a result, now conducting elections to the Panchayat for every five years has become mandatory along with reserving seats for women and other marginal sections. This is a great leap forward, which can actually lead to empower panchayats in the days to come.

2.4.8 EXERCISE

- 1 Write a note on PRIs in Jammu and Kashmir.
- 2 Explain the main features of the 1989 Panchayat Raj Act.
- 3 Critically assess the limitations of the 1989 Panchayat Raj Act.
- 4 Write a note on corrective measures recently initiated by State Government to bring PRIs in Jammu and Kashmir on par with 73rd Constitutional Amendment of Government of India.

2.4.9 SOURCE

Gull Wani and Effat Yasmin, “Democratic Decentralisation in J&K: Gender and Political Change”, *Mainstream*, VOL LIV, No 1, December 26, 2015.

3.1 MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES: CONGRESS, BJP, NC AND PDP

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

3.1.0 Objectives

3.1.1 Introduction

3.1.2 The Indian National Congress (INC)

3.1.2.1 Ideology

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3.1.4 The National Conference (NC)

3.1.4.1 Historical Background

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3.1.5.2 Self Rule as Way Forward for Resolving the Kashmir Issue

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3.1.6 Let Us Sum UP

3.1.7 Exercise

3.1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will study the major ideology and performance of major political parties in Jammu and Kashmir. After going through this lesson, you will be able to know:

- the presence, functioning and electoral performance of two national parties, the Congress and BJP;
- the functioning and performance of two regional parties, the NC and PDP;
- how the shift from hegemonic politics of NC to competitive politics with the emergence PDP did good to the political and governance dynamics of the state.

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Political parties are the life line of the political system, without these it is difficult to run a democratic system of government. Political parties are the channel through which the representatives are getting elected. As you already know, in India the political parties are broadly divided into two categories, the national and regional. Election Commission of India (ECI) recognizes three categories of parties – national parties, state parties and registered unrecognized parties. As per its criteria a political party will be recognised as a State party if (a) its candidates have secured at least six per cent of total valid votes and it has returned at least two members to the Legislative Assembly; or (b) if it wins at least three per cent of the total number of seats in the Assembly. A national party is recognised if (a) the candidates set up by it in any four or more states at the election to the Lok Sabha or to the Assembly concerned have secured at least six per cent of total votes and it has returned at least four members to the Lok Sabha from any state or states; or (b) its candidates have been elected to the Lok Sabha from at least two per cent of the total seats (i.e. 11 seats in the House having 543 members), and these candidates have been elected from at least three different states.

In Jammu and Kashmir both national and regional parties along with many other small unrecognized parties are competing to win the confidence of the people. The geographical, demographical and social make up of the region is adding uniqueness to the party politics. The polarization of political loyalties between two major regions, that is between Jammu region and Kashmir, and Ladakh's distinctiveness, is what summarizes the political competition. In this backdrop, this lesson gives an understanding about political dynamics of the erstwhile State while focusing on four major political parties Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

3.1.2 THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (INC)

The Indian National Congress is one of the oldest political parties in India that came into existence in 1885 to fight against British colonialism. In the post-independence period, the Congress has become the dominant political party in India in electoral arena or otherwise as well carrying the legacy of freedom movement.

It is interesting to note that Congress did not have any branch in Jammu and Kashmir till mid-sixties. To begin with, the party leadership did not feel the need to have a branch here as it, particularly Nehru, considered National Conference its sister organization. The relationship between Congress and National Conference was so cordial that Congress never felt the need for having its own unit in the State till 1960s. Due to Congress's proximity with Sheikh Abdulla-led National Conference, its presence in Jammu region also very nominal, almost non-existent. The Jan Sangh has more roots in Jammu political landscape.

However, the Sheikh Abdulla's dismissal and his imprisonment changed the political situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed who replaced Adullah as a Chief Minister and NC leader is not that popular. The Bakshi led National Conference was so unpopular in the Kashmir Valley that it had to depend on the Centre and Congress Party for its survival. Hence, for all practical purposes, the National Conference led by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed became an extension to the Congress party in Jammu and Kashmir. So much identification of the National Conference was there with the Congress during this period that in 1962 when the Congress party decided to undergo the process of reorganization of party under Kamraj Plan and Cabinet Ministers and Chief Ministers belonging to Congress Party were asked to submit their resignations, Bakshi Ghulam also submitted his resignation despite the fact that officially he belonged to National Conference and was not a member of the Congress party. However, the ambivalence in the position of the Congress was removed when G M Sadiq, who succeeded Bakshi as Chief Minister, formally merged NC with Congress. This is how the presence of Congress appeared in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir.

However, the re-entry of Sheikh Abdullah to the political scene after Indira-Sheikh accord in 1974 once again altered the political context in the State. Sheikh Abdullah revived the National Conference in the state and contested the 1977 assembly elections, considered free and fair elections in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, independently without any collaboration

with the Congress. In fact, in the Kashmir Valley both parties competed with each other in the election. National Conference secured a comfortable majority by winning 45 out of 75 seats, Janta Party 13, Congress got 11 while Jamat-e-Islami got one seat. As a result, Congress has become an opposition party in the State Assembly.

During the 1983 Assembly elections, once again Congress and NC competed with each other, and the NC won with sufficient majority and formed the government in the state. This is the time that the Congress Party started intervening extensively in all the opposition ruled states and made various attempts to destabilise the governments ruled by the opposition parties. The same thing happened in Jammu and Kashmir as well. Soon after the 1983 elections, the Congress became restless and started manipulating the politics and encouraged defections within the National Conference. It kept on putting pressure upon the National Conference, led by Farooq Abdullah, to enter into alliance with it. Congress manoeuvred the NC internal friction in its advantages, encouraged defections and ultimately dismissed the Farooq Abdullah led government. This led to Farooq Abdullah shed anti-Congressism and join hands with Congress to contest elections. During the 1987 elections National Conference and Congress had reached an agreement of not opposing each other's candidates. In this election Congress won 26, National Conference 40, BJP 2 and independents 8. This very undemocratic act of Congress and its opportunistic alliance with NC led to the severe political crisis in the state with rise of militancy and violence and abandoning of the democratic politics about a decade.

However, Elections in 2002 were a huge landmark in the process of democratization in the state. The newly emerged Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) in the Kashmir Valley has given a tough competition to the National Conference while Congress has yet to confront a strong rival in the Jammu region. Due to these factors, the PDP in Kashmir Valley and Congress in Jammu region secured majority seats in the 2002 election. Eventually, PDP, Congress, and others entered onto coalition to form the government on the basis of a common minimum programme. This result is watershed in many ways in the history state's electioneering history. It's a clear beginning of the coalition politics in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It also introduced Common Minimum Programme (CMP) and rotational chief ministership between coalition partners Congress and the PDP. As part of this agreement for the first time in the history of the state a known Congressman, Gulam Nabi Azad has become Chief Minister of the state. It is also historical in the sense that for the first time a person from Jammu region has become the Chief

Minister of the state. However, during the last days of the tenure the relations between PDP and Congress strained due to Amaranath Agitation and PDP withdrew its support to the Ghulam Nabi Azad Government.

In 2009 election, Congress lost some of its popularity due to Amarnath Agitation. Still it could win 17 states. It again became a coalition partner in Omar Adullah government of National Conference. The government of National Conference and Congress successfully completed the full term of six years without any serious rift between them.

The 2014 Assembly election has repeated all India phenomenon in Jammu and Kashmir as well. Congress has lost its pre-eminent position in Jammu and Kashmir, as happened in rest India, as Modi wave swept entire India to give a thumping majority to BJP. This is one of the Congress Party's poorest electoral performances. It had won only 12 seats and became opposition party as BJP and PDP formed the coalition government under the stewardship of Mufti Mohammed Sayyed as Chief Minister. Since then the Congress Party is struggling to regain the ground that it had lost to BJP. However, the elections held in the state after that – the parliamentary elections, elections to the local bodies – are not showing any signs of revival for the Congress Party.

Electoral Performance of Congress in Assembly Elections

Year	Seats Won	Percentage of Voting
1972	58	55.53
1977	11	15.98
1983	25	29.97
1987	26	20.19
1996	7	20.00
2002	20	21.38
2009	17	17.40
2014	12	18.00

3.1.3 THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY (BJP)

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), formed in 1980, is one of the oldest parties in India if we factor the original parent party Jan Sangh. It is an incarnation of Jan Sangh which was active in

Indian politics in the post-independent period, especially since the Janata experiment of mid-1970s. It projects itself as a champion of the socio-religious cultural values of the country's Hindu majority, building great India and strong national defence against internal and external forces. Its constituency is strengthened by the broad umbrella of Hindu nationalist organizations, informally known as the Sangh Parivar, in which the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) plays a leading role.

The biggest expansion of the BJP took place between 1989 and 1992 during Ramajanma bhoomi agitation in Ayodhya. Apart from firmly establishing its Hindu credentials, it drew large numbers of people and youth into its ranks. Most important, the Ayodhya movement enabled the BJP to penetrate and establish a foothold across Indian states. Though projected as upper caste party, in reality, most of the weaker castes and classes are supporting BJP. In fact, BJP has won the support and allegiance of backwards castes (OBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) more than any other party in India at present. In fact, in the State of Uttar Pradesh, which is known for strong Dalit politics with the dominant presence of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), the BJP won most of the parliamentary and assembly constituencies reserved for the Scheduled Castes candidates during recent elections. Though it came to power in the Centre along with allies during the last years of 1990s and early period of 2000 as part of NDA, under the leadership of Vajpayee, however, its complete dominance in the national politics began in 2014 when it came to power in the Centre under the leadership of Narendra Modi. The BJP repeated its performance once again in 2019 with more massive mandate securing majority on its own.

3.1.3.2 BJP in Jammu and Kashmir

Though the BJP formally came into existence in the 1980s, however, its politics and ideology are more familiar and rooted in the state of Jammu and Kashmir than in any other region of India. The BJP is in essence inherited and pursued the politics and ideology of the Praja Parishad which was an active and strong opposition party in the post-independent period in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

At the time of India's independence, a section of the Hindus of Jammu were organised under the banner of All Jammu and Kashmir Rajya Hindu Sabha, with Prem Nath Dogra as a leading

member. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was established in Jammu in 1939 with the efforts of Kishen Dev Joshi. Jagdish Abrol and later Balraj Madhok, who arrived in 1942, are credited with its expansion. Madhok moved to the Kashmir Valley in 1944 and established RSS there. Prem Nath Dogra was also the chairman (sanghchalak) of the RSS in Jammu. With a demand for full integration of Jammu and Kashmir with rest of the India, the Praja Parishad was founded in November 1947 soon after the Pakistani tribal invasion. Balraj Madhok was a key organiser of the party and Hari Wazir became its first President. Prem Nath Dogra and others soon joined in. According to Madhok, the objective of the party was to achieve the “full integration” of Jammu and Kashmir with India. The Praja Parishad was strongly critical of the Delhi Agreement that has given Sheikh Abdullallah a preeminent position in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir and a special status to the state. The Praja Parishad advocated complete accession of Jammu and Kashmir to the Indian Union and “the full application to the State of the Indian Constitution”. Failing this, they demanded that Jammu be separated from Kashmir and given the status of a Part B State or merged with the Punjab or Himachal Pradesh State.

The most powerful champion of the Praja Parishad in India was the unofficial but acknowledged leader of the opposition to the Congress in the Indian House of the People, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee. Dr. Mookerjee had resigned from the Indian Cabinet in 1950 because of his dissatisfaction with the "weak" policy of the government regarding Kashmir and Pakistan. For a time he had been with the Hindu Mahasabha, and had then founded the Bhartiya Jan Sangh. Later on, he championed the cause of Jammu and Kashmir’s full integration with rest of India.

In terms of electoral politics, the Praja Parishad initially contested 28 out of 30 seats allocated to Jammu in the 1951 elections. However, the nomination papers of thirteen of its candidates were rejected on the grounds of technicalities. The Praja Parishad announced a boycott of the elections shortly before the polling. Consequently, all National Conference candidates were declared as winners from the Jammu province. Thus, obstructed from democratic participation, the Praja Parishad took to the streets organising protests. By invoking slogans such as “Ek Vidhan, Ek Nishan, Ek Pradhan”, the Praja Parishad demanded for full integration of the state with the rest of India. In December 1952, Jan Sangh president Syama Prasad Mookerjee announced the launch of a nation-wide agitation for the abolition of Article 370. On May 8, 1953 he decided to enter J&K, thus violating the prevalent permit system and was arrested by Sheikh Abdullallah as soon as he set foot in the state. He was jailed in Srinagar,

which led to his mysterious death on June 23, 1953. Due to subsequent political developments such as jailing of Sheikh Abdullah and installation of Bakshi government reduced the intensity of Jan Sangh politics in Jammu region. Since then it relegated to the background in the electoral politics though the party remain very strong ideologically and in terms of committed cadre with firm roots of RSS in all the districts of Jammu region.

When politics of the BJP got a momentum in rest of the India during the late 1980s, especially in northern India, it again started a major force in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir, though its electoral outcomes were not that significant. Even in the Jammu region the voting turnout of the party continued to be quite low during the decades of 1980's. In 1983, for instance, the party contested 28 seats of the legislative assembly but it could not register its victory in even one seat. In 1987, it contested 28 seats and won only two seats.

Yet, despite its initial weakness, the party gained ground in the region in the late eighties. Raise of Militancy in Kashmir Valley and parts of Jammu region, attacks on Kashmiri Pandits in 1990s shifted political opinion in favour of BJP as it championed the cause of the victims of militancy and separatism. The relevance of BJP in the Jammu region was increased due to a polarization of its society. The assembly elections of 1996 revealed a consolidated position of BJP in the Jammu region as it won eight assembly seats. But it failed to repeat the same upward performance in 2002 assembly elections due to increased internal tassel among the key leaders of the state.

BJP's performance, however, got a boost after the religious cum-regional mobilisation during the Amarnath agitation of 2008. In the assembly elections that followed immediately after this agitation, the party won 11 seats. Its vote share in the Jammu region went up to around 22%. Of the 11 seats that it won, 10 were located in the "Hindu belt" of the region. Comprised of 21 constituencies, this belt runs across the four predominantly Hindu districts of Jammu, Kathua, Samba and Udhampur. The party scored the highest vote share in this belt which was around 27% of the total votes cast in these districts. Of the 11 constituencies that it registered its victory, three were reserved constituencies.

However, despite the increased space for the BJP, the 2008 elections still reflected a plural electoral response within Jammu. At the regional level, the party shared the electoral space with other parties including the Congress, the NC, the Panthers Party, and the PDP. One of the

reasons for its weak performance is once again the internal factionalism. The BJP has suspended seven MLAs from the party including Legislature Party leader in Assembly, Prof Chaman Lal Gupta, a former Union Minister as they voted for NC-Congress candidate in a election to State Legislative Council.

The BJP's position changed completely in the 2014 elections. Rather than being one among the many parties of Jammu, it has emerged as the dominant party of the region leaving the NC and the Congress way behind. The BJP's dominance of Jammu in these elections can be gauged not only from the sheer difference in the number of seats (all other parties got only 11 seats against the BJP's 25), but also from its vote share and reach over the region. The BJP's vote share increased from around 22% in 2008 to 40.53% this time as it marked its presence not only in the predominantly "Hindu belt" but also in the Muslim-majority areas. It has gained entry in those districts where it never had a presence; for instance, in the Doda belt comprising the three districts of Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban, the BJP won four of the six seats. It also gained entry in the Poonch-Rajouri belt, so far a domain of the NC, winning the Kalakote and Nowshera seats.

Not only that, the performance was so huge that it created a situation in which the formation of the government was impossible without partnering the BJP. The only workable alliance is that of the PDP-BJP coalition as it represents the will of the people all across the state. Hence, the PDP entered an alliance with BJP and formed the government, resulted in first time BJP became part of leading partner in coalition government of Jammu and Kashmir. However, Mufti Mohammed Sayyed's unexpected death created a rift between both the parties. Though they have overcome it successfully and once again decided to continue their alliance and as well as coalition government, under the leadership of Mehbooba Mufti, however the collation abruptly ended in June 2018 when the BJP withdrew support to Mehbooba Mufti led coalition government. The State was under the Governor rule for a while till the Centre brought Reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir Act on August 05, 2019 that divided the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories, that of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Electoral Performance of the BJP

Year	Seats Won	Percentage of Voting
1983	0	3.18

1987	3	5.09
1996	8	12.13
2002	1	8.57
2009	11	12.6
2014	25	23.0

3.1.4 THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE (NC)

The National Conference (NC), one of the oldest regional parties in India, has remained central to the politics of Jammu and Kashmir ever since its inception in 1939. Evolved as a political movement challenging the feudal and monarchical regime, it traversed a long period of its political existence taking on various forms. After entering the power politics in 1947, it occupied the hegemonic space in Jammu and Kashmir, more specifically in the Kashmir Valley, till it was merged with the Indian National Congress in mid-1960s. However, it resumed its place of dominance after it was resurrected in 1975. Confronted with popular resentment as well as armed militancy, it went into hibernation in 1990 only to be returned back to the centre stage of the mainstream politics of the state in 1996. However, with the rise of another regional party in Kashmir Valley, the PDP, the National Conference yielded some ground to it by adjusting itself to a new reality of opposition party. The transformation of the role of the NC, from a hegemonic actor to the single largest party of the state, has to be located in the larger political context in which the state has been placed in last 15 years or so.

3.1.4.1 Historical Background

The origin of the National Conference (NC) can be traced back to pre-independence rule of Maharaja Hari Singh, the last ruling Prince of the Dogra house. It was during his rule that an organized political movement was born in the beginning of 1930s. The movement was conducted under the banner of the Muslim Conference. The emergence of some radical forces and progressive elements in the state politics helped the redirection of movement from communal to a secular character. In a special session of the conference convened on June 11 and 12, 1939 the nomenclature changed from Muslim Conference to National Conference. The green flag of Muslim Conference was also replaced by a red flag with a plough in the middle of it.

From 1948 to August 1953, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah headed the government formed by the National Conference, but soon unhappy developments took place which led to the Sheikh's dismissal on August 9, 1953. He was arrested and put in detention and then imprisoned. The Sheikh and his trustworthy colleague, Afzal Beg had been kept under detention for about eleven years. During this period, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad headed the Government of the State as the Prime Minister. Bakshi was succeeded by Shamasuddin occupied the office of the Prime Minister for 17 months. With his exit the dominance of National Conference ended because the NC converted itself into the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of G M Sadiq.

The party was resuscitated in 1975 when Sheikh Abdullah rejoined the power politics. Much of the strength of the NC during this phase lay in its re-establishing its political constituency in Kashmir and drawing its sustenance from local support rather than the backing from the centre. It was during this phase that one of the most credible elections in the history of the state was conducted which had given the party an overwhelming mandate in 1977 when Janata Party was in power at the Centre.

However, the death of Sheikh Abdullah brought significant changes to the politics of the National Conference. The autonomy of the NC and its reliance on the popular support could not be sustained after the death of Sheikh Abdullah, although Farooq Abdullah, who inherited the mantle of leadership from his father, sought to carry on the tradition by entering the coalition of national and regional opposition at all-India level. This was the period that the ruling Congress at the Centre intervened and intruded into politics of every state and attempted to destabilise the governments of opposition parties. After giving it a tough fight in 1983 in one of the most fiercely fought elections in the state, the National Conference submitted to the pressures of Congress and entered into an alliance with it, after the latter connived the unceremonious overthrow of the Farooq-led NC government in 1984. This episode led the party leadership to conclude that the sustenance of the NC in power is more related with its relationship with the centre than with its popular base. Hence, the simple logic that the party followed henceforth was to remain on the right side of the centre.

The popular disenchantment with the 1987 assembly elections caused severe damage to the legitimacy of the National Conference and erosion of its popular base in the Kashmir Valley.

The rise of militancy and resulted violence that led to death of important workers of National Conference forced it to abandon power in early 1990. More than the popular resentment against the party, it was rather difficult in maintaining the political order that led it to withdraw not only from governance but also from the political scene. Following the imposition of the governor's rule in January 1990, the party went into hibernation. However, in the later half of the 1990s, despite numerous difficulties, the NC resumed its political activities and took upon itself the task of governance after winning one of the most difficult and most controversial assembly elections in 1996.

3.1.4.2 Electoral Performance

Till 2002 assembly elections, the NC has been the single dominant party of the state. Since 1975 when it was revived under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah, it has been emerging not only victorious in every single assembly election but has also been dominating the electoral space of Kashmir leaving a very narrow space for the opposition parties. Thus its share of seats and votes after various assembly elections was: 58/76 (46.2 per cent votes) in 1977, 46/76 (47.3 per cent votes) in 1983, 39/76 with another 24 for its alliance partner, Congress (32.99 per cent votes for NC and 20.2 per cent for Congress) in 1987, and 57/87 (34.7 per cent votes) in 1996. In 2002 and 2009, the NC won 28 seats but its voting percentage has gone down from 28.23 to 23.3. In 2014 elections its strength was drastically reduced to 15, the lowest in its entire history with 20.8% of votes.

The 2002 assembly election that ended the era of hegemonic politics of the NC has a healthy impact both on the politics of state as well as that of the NC. With NC as the single party dominating the political scene, politics did not acquire competitive character. This adversely impacted on the process of democratisation process, especially in the Valley where the presence of the opposition was almost negligible. In the absence of the democratic channels, the process of articulation and expression of discontent was blocked and was routed through the only available space of oppositional politics, i e, the separatist politics. The mainstream politics, meanwhile, lost its regional character as the NC, ensured of its return to power election after election, had tended to become complacent about the need for maintaining its linkage with its local constituency, the people of Kashmir. Now with the NC facing competition from PDP and

other parties, the Kashmiri mainstream politics has become more vibrant. Such transformation of politics is particularly beneficial for the NC as it has been forced by the compulsions of circumstances to find its bearings, once again, in the local politics. That is the reason that the party has been finding means to respond to local issues and reflect the sensitivity of the party to local sensibilities. Even before it disassociated from the NDA, it had changed its political discourse – acknowledging the need to engage the Kashmiri separatists and Pakistan and curb the level of human rights violations. However, the transformation of the State into Union Territories is going to rewrite the history and a new phase of electoral politics will emerge with the rise of new political players. We have to how the National Conference is going to operate in the changed political terrain of post-2019.

Electoral Performance of the National Conference

Year	Seats Won	Percentage of Voting
1972		
1977	47	46.73
1983	46	47.29
1987	40	32.98
1996	57	34.79
2002	28	28.23
2009	28	23.30
2014	15	20.80

3.1.5 THE PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDP)

Jammu and Kashmir People’s Democratic Party (JKPDP) is a regional political party in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was founded in the year 1999 by Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, the former Union Home Minister in the V.P. Singh's Jan Morcha. A former member of the Indian National Congress, Sayeed parted ways with the Congress to join Jan Morcha in 1989. He rejoined the Congress within a brief span of time, which he ultimately quit, to form the JKPDP, along with his daughter Mehbooba Mufti in July 1999.

It is believed that Sayeed felt the need for a new party so as to "persuade the Government of India to initiate an unconditional dialogue with Kashmiris for resolution of the Kashmir

problem." The JKPDP operates on the ideology of self-rule, as distinctly different from the issues of autonomy. It believes that self-rule as a political philosophy, as opposed to autonomy, ensures the empowerment of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, while further engaging in debates over new political territoriality of J&K.

The JKPDP, through its political ideology, which found massive support among the people of the state, won the 2002 Legislative Assembly elections to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Mufti Mohammad Sayeed became the Chief Minister of J&K in 2002 and remained in office till 2005. The JKPDP was in alliance with the Congress in the UPA, till 2009. After a brief interval between 2009-2014, again it came to power in January 2015 after winning majority seats in 2014 Assembly elections.

3.1.5.1 Ideology of PDP

According to Constitution of PDP, the Party stand for:

- Democratic participation in the affairs of the State of Jammu and Kashmir for strengthening the democratic institutions through constitutional means.
- Strengthening religions brotherhood, inter-communal and inter-religion friendship co-operation and solidarity.
- Balance growth of the three regions of the state.
- Economic, political and social justice for all the sections of society particularly the down trodden and the backward classes.
- Empowerment of women and other weaker sections of the society.
- Protection of the Geographical and Cultural environment of the State and
- Promotion of liberal values and spirit of tolerance and protection of human rights.

3.1.5.2 Self Rule as a way forward for Resolving Kashmir Issue

The PDP offers “self-rule” as a way forward for resolving the Kashmir issue. The essence of “self rule”, according to PDP, lies in trying to suggest a creative framework for resolution of the issue without compromising the sovereignty of the two nation states involved. It factors both internal and external dimensions of the problem.

The Self-rule document states that the J&K issue cannot be resolved on the basis of exclusively intrastate level initiatives. It requires a combination of intra-state measures with inter-state and supra-state measures. This approach, which is underlying the concept of self-rule, is a practical way that would eliminate the sources of ethno-territorial conflicts, entrenched in the traditional notions of sovereignty, self-determination, national and ethnic borders. Self-rule is a formulation that will integrate the region without disturbing the extant sovereign authority over delimited territorial space. It doesn't impair the significance of the line of control as territorial divisions but negates its acquired and imputed manifestations of state competition for power, prestige, or an imagined historical identity. It is a way of "sharing sovereignty", without need or commitment to political merging. It is based on the creation of innovative international institutional arrangements that have a political, economic and security character. Self-rule encompasses the society, the state, and the economy. Self-rule, being a trans-border concept, has a pan-Kashmir dimension but at the same time seeks to regionalise power across J&K.

Self rule as a political philosophy is being articulated around the conception of federalism and confederation that allow for sharing of power between two levels of government, for the sharing of sovereignty in a coordinated but not subordinated to one another, each exercising supreme sovereignty in its constitutional prerogatives. The comprehensive formulation of self-rule has three subcomponents: a) A new political superstructure that integrates the region and empowers sub-regions; b) A phased economic integration that transcends borders; and c) Constitutional restructuring that ensures sharing of sovereignty without comprising political sovereignty of either nation state.

3.1.5.3 Formation of Government by PDP (2002 and 2014)

It is historic victory for PDP in 2002 as it won majority seats in Kashmir region and formed a coalition government with the Congress. The 2002 assembly election was also significant for creating an environment for mainstream politics to retrieve some political ground that they lost for separatist politics. The opening of political space for internal competition, much before this election, that made the big difference. Till 1996, the NC was the only regional party that dominated by acquiring a sort of monopoly in mainstream politics. With the emergence of the

PDP as another Kashmir-based party, in 1999, the character of the power politics was changed. It acquired a highly competitive nature.

The PDP took the lead in blurring the boundaries between the separatist and the mainstream discourse. With a view to make a dent into the NC's stronghold on Kashmir's politics on the one hand and to make its presence felt in the context of the prevailing environment of separatism on the other, it introduced its "pro-people" agenda of "healing touch" to the people. It was the first political party to bring the issues related to conflict to the centre of the mainstream political discourse and to demand dialogue (with the separatists, militants and Pakistan) as the basis of its resolution. It was also to respond to various peace formulas, especially emanating from Pakistan. Of late, it has been proactive in its response to the Musharraf's four-point formula and has been emphasising on the issues of demilitarisation, "self-rule" and the mechanisms of joint control.

When it was in power between 2002 and 2005, The PDP takes credit to the creation of conducive atmosphere for initiating peace process and taking Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) to normalize relations between India and Pakistan. It also takes pride to start cross LoC trade, opening of Srinagar-Muzafarabad and Poonch-Rawalakote roads.

However, the tenure of first PDP government, under the chief ministership of Mufti Mohammed Sayyed, was a not smooth ride. There were bitter quarrels between PDP and Congress, which is a coalition partner. Though PDP attempted to retain Chief Ministership for full six years, the Congress not yielded to the pressure and took over it as per the initial agreement. However, during the Amaranth land controversy, the PDP withdraw its support to Gulam Nabi Azad's government in 2008 and the coalition experiment ended with a bitter relations between both the parties.

The subsequent elections that were held in 2009, the PDP lost to its rival regional party, National Conference which formed the government in alliance with Congress Party. The coalition stayed in power till 2014.

The PDP Victory in 2014 Assembly Elections

In 2014 Assembly Elections, the Mehbooba Mufti-led PDP got 28 seats with the BJP coming second with 25 seats in the state. The polarisation of voting is so clear in the election that the

PDP won almost all its seats in the Kashmir Valley, and the BJP won all its seats from Jammu regions. Since no party won the majority seats, the formation of coalition was inevitable. Hence, the political situation brought the two parties, the PDP and the BJP, together to form a coalition government. This happened despite the negative reactions from many sides to the coming together of the two diametrically opposite parties in the process of government formation.

Agenda for Future

Once decided to form the coalition, both the parties are cautious of the limitations of this alliance and the perils it portends. That is why a common minimum programme (CMP) or an “Agenda for Future” was drafted and finalised at the insistence of the PDP. The CMP serves the purpose of, at the least, selling their agendas to their respective constituencies. It can also help iron out differences, especially about contentious issues like Article 370 and the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act.

The “Agenda of the Future” issued by both the PDP and BJP begins with right note, reflecting the reality of the political situation. It begins by stating that: “The results of these elections have been judged as fractured and indecisive by everyone. The reality is that it is not the mandate of political parties that is fractured; it is the polity of J&K that is fractured. Instead of being judgmental about these electoral results, the PDP and the BJP have made efforts to understand the verdict in all its complexity. The reality on the ground, even if complex and complicated, needs to be faced politically not numerically. That is the real challenge. The PDP and the BJP have decided to bring together their political and legislative resources to convert this complex challenge into an opportunity”.

The CMP may, in some ways, sound like a jugglery of words and be marked by ambiguity, leaving much to interpretation, but in many other ways, having listed key areas for development, devolution of powers and transparent governance, it is an ambitious road map to ensure equitable development and benefits to all regions of the state. On the surface at least, the CMP appears to give an impression that a common goal has been agreed upon. But this is easier said than done. In a state, where contentious issues and controversies erupt as a norm, not as an aberration, even small distortions could turn out to be lethal. The alliance partners would have to be on their toes even if the CMP were to be adhered to in principle and implementation.

The coalition partners have shown maturity in handling contentious issues such as Article 370. The Agenda for Future states that 'considering the political and legislative realities, the present position will be maintained on all the constitutional provisions pertaining to J&K including the special status in the Constitution of India'. BJP that had the abolition of Article 370 as its core ideological position not only has shirked away from insisting on its abolition but also accepting it as a 'political reality' of the state and agreeing to maintain it.

The coalition partners have also shown maturity by showing flexibility from their stated position with regard to Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). The Agenda for Future state the Central Government will examine 'the need and desirability of all the special laws being applied to the state in view of the situation which is improving' and the possibility of de-notifying the Disturbed Areas Act with a view to enable the Union Government to take a final view on the continuation of AFSPA in these areas'.

The most fascinating part of the Agenda lies in the acknowledgement of all those issues as the (real) 'issues' confronting the state which need to be addressed. So far, one of the two parties would be focusing on some of these, only to be vehemently opposed by the other. This is the first time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir that the two sides have acknowledged that the other side has a point, howsoever divergent and yet needing attention. It is not a small feat considering the fact that denial has cost so much to the people of the state. Lack of internal political consensus on important issues confronting the state has added to another layer of conflict which has not only been used by various forces external to the state to their advantage but has also led to moments when the people belonging to the divergent positions have wondered about the logic of the integrity of the state - the moments when the voices for the division of the state became sharpened. What therefore remains the essence of the agenda is not only the acknowledgement of the complexity of the internal politics of the state and the political divergence within but also the possibilities of moving forward to evolve the very much needed political consensus within the state. How successful will be the coalition government in managing the contradictions and how far the "Agenda for Future" would serve to resolve contentious issue will be known only in the future.

The Mufti Mohammed Sayyed's unexpected demise brought a serious crisis to PDP-BJP alliance in the state. For a long time there was a stalemate in the negotiations between PDP and

BJP as both of them could not reach to a common agreement, which resulted in imposition of Governor's rule in the state. However, though delayed both the parties agreed to adhere to CMP they have signed earlier and decided to continue their coalition government. Though the alliance of PDP and BJP continued for some more time Mehbooba Mufti as Chief Minister, the rift between both the parties widened over the period, which culminated in BJP withdrawing support to PDP in June 2018 which ultimately resulted in imposition of the Governor rule. The status of State changing into Union Territories brought further rupture to political fortunes of the regional parties operating in Jammu and Kashmir. It is interesting to see how these political parties responding to unfolding political process in the future.

Electoral Performance of PDP

Year	Seats Won	Percentage of Voting
2002	20	21.38
2009	21	15.5
2014	28	22.7

3.1.6 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson we have discussed the ideology, functioning and electoral performance of four major political parties in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Though all these parties try to portray their ideology is distinct from other party, however, their functioning is, to a large extent, guided by their demographic presence and social base. The two national parties, the Congress and BJP, are having their support base mainly in the Jammu region, hence they are sensitive to urges and demands of people from Jammu region. The regional parties of the State, the NC and PDP, are mostly rooted in the politics of Kashmir Valley, hence they are sensitive to the demands of Valley people. The coalition governments since 2002, having partners representing both the regions, is best suited to balance the interests of the both the regions, hence in a position to bring balanced economic growth to entire state. However, how these political parties respond in changed scenario of Union Territory is interesting to observe.

3.2 ELECTORAL POLITICS: PRE AND POST ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

3.2.0 Objectives

3.2.1 Introduction

3.2.2 History of Elections

3.2.3 Electoral Politics during Pre-Election Commission of India

3.2.3.1 Non-Competitive Electoral Politics and Uncontested Returns

3.2.4 Electoral Politics: Post-Election Commission of India

3.2.5 Features of Electoral Process in Jammu and Kashmir

3.2.5.1 Legitimacy Crisis of Power Politics

3.2.5.2 Fragility of the Party System

3.2.5.3 Weak Opposition Politics

3.2.5.4 Central Intervention and Dependence on Ruling Party in the Centre

3.2.6 Let Us Sum UP

3.2.7 Exercise

3.2.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson explains you administration of elections in Jammu and Kashmir and broader trends prevailed before and after Election Commission of India's jurisdiction extended to the State. After going through this lesson, you will be able to know:

- history of election in Jammu and Kashmir, especially under Dogra Kingdom;
- administration of elections in Jammu and Kashmir and why the process has been criticised by many; and

- main features of electoral process in the State.

3.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Electoral politics and process are vital aspects of a democratic structure. A free and fair election are a minimum requirement for any democratic society. A political systems legitimacy depends on how transparently the elections are conducted and how much representative the democratic system is. Noting the importance of transparency and fairness, most of the democratic countries have established an independent election commission to conducted periodic elections in their respective countries. In case of India, the largest democracy in the world, the need for free and independent election commission was recognized in the process of constitution making itself. Being a country that empowered its citizens with universal adult franchise, for the first time in the history of humanity, India's nationalist leadership realized the vitality the election commission is going to provide to India's democratic structure.

Hence, the Election Commission of India was established in 1950 itself to conduct a free and fair elections in India and various provinces in India. Initially the Commission was appointed only with one Commissioner. The Election Commissioner Amendment Act, 1989 was adopted on 1 January 1990 which turned the Commission into a multi-member body: a 3-member Commission has been in operation since then and the decisions by the Commission are made by a majority vote. The Chief Election Commissioner and the two Election Commissioners who are usually retired IAS officers draw salaries and allowances at par with those of the Judges of the Supreme Court of India

However, due to peculiar circumstances prevailed in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, special status accorded to it, and most importantly, due to prevailing political complexities in the State, the jurisdiction of Election Commission of India has not been extended to the erstwhile state for a considerable. This has implicated the politics and political process and distorted the functioning of the democratic process considerably. Due this factor, you will study in this how the electioneering has been carried out in Jammu and Kashmir since 1950s and its political implications over the period to the democratic politics.

3.2.2 ELECTORAL PROCES DURING MONARCHY

The Electoral history in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir can be traced to the monarchical period, to the days of Maharaja Hari Singh, when *Praja Sabha* established in 1934. The *Praja Sabha*, the first Legislature established in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, was comprised of 75 members, out of which 33 were to be elected. However, these 33 elected members were not elected from territorial constituencies, as it is the practice today, but elected by the religious communities in the state. The *Praja Sabha* was established in the backdrop of the Muslim subjects in the state, especially from the Kashmir region, raised against Maharaja opposing the communal discrimination. To address the issues raised by various communities in the state, a Constitutional Reforms Conference, headed by B. J. Glancy, was appointed to recommend measures so as to associate the masses with the administration of the state. The conference submitted its report in April, 1932. It made recommendation for the establishment of a legislative assembly in the state, giving representation to all the communities in the state as per their proportion, 21 Muslims, 10 Hindus and 2 Sikhs.

The elections conducted during this period were much more different what we experience today. They were held on the basis of Monto-Merely recommendations which restricted the electorate to certain sections of the society. The voting rights are restricted to educated, property holders, business and professional people, etc. Among the qualifications required for the right to vote included those related to education, holding of property, professional occupation, and the like. Women, illiterate and people having yearly income of less than Rs.400, were excluded from the right to vote. Commenting on the limited nature of electoral process at that time, A S Anand notes: "The franchise was very limited. It did not cover more than 3 percent of the population. Women were altogether excluded from voting. Illiterates were not entitled to vote. The literate votes consisted mostly of the lawyers, medical practitioners pensioned officers, title holders, village and district headmen, priests and managers of religious parties. No person who did not have an yearly income of Rs.400/- or more could vote". More importantly, the electoral process was limited due to the fact that the official members outnumbered the elected members and very few people were enfranchised. However, in 1939, the number of elected members in the *Praja Sabha* was increased to 40, making nominated members minority. it was an important

Proclamation in the constitutional history of State which could be considered as one more step towards the goal of responsible government.

The Constitutional Act of 1939 further attempted to reform the governance and representation structures to expand the critical democratic space within the monarchy. It provided for a unicameral legislature consisting of His Highness and the Praja Sabha. It also provided, as mentioned above, for an elected majority in the Praja Sabha. The members of the Praja Sabha were given freedom of speech and no member shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in the Praja Sabha. In short, the 1939 Act actively associated the subjects with the administration of the State while not surrendering the sovereign rights in favour of the Praja Sabha.

The Muslim Conference that renounced itself to rename as National Conference, started agitation for more representational democracy under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah. In 1941, the National Conference became a formal member of the All India State People's Conference which spearheaded the liberation struggle in the Indian States. However, some of the party members who opposed the name change remained the leaders of the Muslim Conference had taken ambivalent position towards constitutional reforms.

In order to pacify the agitating masses, the Maharaja appointed a Commission under the chairmanship of Chief Justice of State High Court in July 1943 to review the working of the Constitution of the state. The National Conference prepared a detailed programme of reform and reconstruction for the State and submitted it to the Commission for its consideration. The Commission considered these reforms beyond the its scope and refused to accept. Any cooperation and formal association between the Maharaja and National Conference considerably ended thenceforth. However, in 1944 the National Conference adopted the proposal submitted to Commission as the party's Manifesto. Popularly known as agenda for "Naya Kashmir", it contains the Constitutional reforms, a bill of rights and details about representative political institutions along with other proposals for cultural and educational development of the masses of Jammu and Kashmir.

When India was about attain its independence from British and there was a considerable confusion about the future status of princely states, the National Conference started agitation of "Quit Kashmir" against the rule of Maharaja. In this backdrop, the Maharaja of Jammu and

Kashmir State decided to hold the second election to the *Praja Sabha* in January 1947. The National Conference, as expected, boycotted these elections. The Muslim Conference won 16 of the 21 Muslim seats.

3.2.3 ELECTORAL PROCESS IN POST-ACCESSION JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The electoral process in the post-1947 period has to be understood in the context of the Special constitutional status enjoyed by the state. Following the Accession, the interim government, headed by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, negotiated a special constitutional status of the state which allowed to have a different relationship with the Union government as compared to the rest of the states in India. Known as Asymmetrical federalism, this special status was formalised by adding Article 370 to the Constitution of India. This special status has accorded extensive powers to Jammu and Kashmir, limiting the role of the Centre very few areas of strategic importance. The Parliament also had a limited power of making laws for the state. The State was allowed to draft a constitution of its own through an elected Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly that was also to serve as the first Legislative Assembly was convened in 1951.

3.2.3.1 ELECTORAL POLITICS DURING PRE-ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Due to the Special Status accorded to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the electoral process of the state was de-linked from the election process in rest of India. The power of the Union Parliament to make laws concerning elections in J&K was not extended to the state. Therefore, the laws relating to election to either House of Parliament or to the either House of the legislature were not constitutionally determined but left it to the then State Government led by Sheikh Abdullah. The entry 72 of the Union List dealing with elections was also not made applicable to the state. As a result, Sheikh Abdullah led government has decided everything related to the electoral process including delimitation of territorial constituencies, preparation of voters list, conduct of elections, declaration of results, etc. In determining the matters related to the electoral process, the provisions of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, framed during the monarchical period, were followed. Hence, the responsibility for the 'superintendence, direction

and control' of election to the State Legislature was given to the state Election and Franchise Commissioner to be appointed by the Sadar-i-Riyasat, that is the person appointed by the Sheikh Abdullah led government. In short, the electoral rules were locally framed without following norms incorporated in the Indian Constitution.

Elections to the Constituent Assembly 1951

On 30 April 1951, the Prince Regent Karan Singh issued a proclamation announcing the elections for the Constituent Assembly. The new rules, Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly Elections Rules, were framed to conduct the elections. The Constituent Assembly was to have a nominal membership of 100 members, of which 25 seats were allocated to Kashmir under Pakistani control (which were never filled). Of the remaining 75 seats, Kashmir was allocated 43 seats, Ladakh 2 seats and Jammu 30 seats.

The foremost modification carried out by these new rules was expanding the electoral space. The limited voting rights given in the earlier constitutional system was abandoned and the system of universal adult franchise was institutionalised. The Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly Elections Rules further provided that every person whose name had been duly entered in the electoral roll of any constituency was entitled to vote.

The Proclamation issued specifying the rules to be followed in the conduct of elections to the Constituent Assembly reads as follows:

Yuvraj Karan Singh, do hereby direct as follows:

- A Constituent Assembly consisting of representatives of the people, elected on the basis of adult franchise, shall be constituted forthwith for the purpose of framing a constitution for the State of Jammu and Kashmir;
- For the purposes of the said elections the State shall be divided into a number of territorial constituencies, each containing a population of 40,000 or as near thereto as possible, and each electing one member. A delimitation committee shall be set up by the Government to make recommendations as to the number of constituencies and the limits of each constituency;
- Elections to the Constituent Assembly shall be on the basis of adult franchise, that is to say, every person who is a State subject of any class, as defined in the notification

No....., is not less than twenty-one years of age on the first day of March, has been a resident in the constituency for such period as may be prescribed by the rules, shall be entitled to register in the electoral rolls of that constituency, provided that any person who is of unsound mind or has been so declared by a competent court, shall be disqualified for registration;

- The vote at the election shall be by direct and secret ballot;

Any person who had fulfilled the following conditions and qualifications was eligible to contest the elections:

1. A State subject as defined in the Notification L/1984 dated 18th April 1927.
2. A registered elector of his constituency
3. A literate
4. A person of 25 years of age on or before the first day of August, 1951.

The rules also provided for certain disqualifications. Following categories of people were not eligible to contest elections:

1. Holder of any office of profit in Jammu and Kashmir Government or Government of India or any other State of Government of India or any whole-time employee in any Municipal or Local Body in the State. (Exemption however was made for a Minister in the State or a pensioner of Jammu and Kashmir Government, or any other Government in India or whole-time employee of any cooperative society.)
2. Convicted and sentenced for an offence punishable with imprisonment for not less than two years or for such a lesser period as might be allowed in any particular case of election commissioner.
3. Dismissed for corruption either by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir State or by Government of India unless a period of 3 years or such less period as the Election Commissioner might allow in any particular case.
4. Of unsound mind as declared by a competent court; and

5. An undischarged insolvent and a person so declared by a competent court. But an insolvent, on a certificate that his insolvency was caused by misfortune without any misconduct on his part, was exempted from this disqualification.

3.2.3.2 Flawed Electoral Process: Uncontested Returns and Massive Majorities

The electoral process in Jammu and Kashmir has had a chequered history of elections reflecting the troubled politics of the state since its accession to India in 1947. The first elections were held to the state's constituent-cum-legislative assembly in 1951. It was a time when the influence of Sheikh Abdullah was at its height and nobody from the opposition stood so ruling party candidates were returned unchallenged. A prominent lawyer, Ghulam Nabi Haggroo, says that the elected MLAs came to be known as “made by Khaliq”.

There were two broader trends that dominated the electoral politics in the initial electoral politics of the State or before the India's Election Commission's jurisdiction was extended to the State of Jammu Kashmir. These are 1) the phenomenon of uncontested returns and 2) the tendency for massive majority in favour of the ruling party. It was during the 1951 Constituent cum Legislative Assembly election that the unique trend of uncontested returns was initiated in this state. As many as 73 out of the 75 Assembly seats were returned uncontested during this election.

The former Chairman of United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP), Dr. Josef Korbel, in his book *Danger in Kashmir* that: “Forty-three candidates were elected unopposed one week before the election date, and two independent candidates withdrew under pressure later. There was actually no balloting. In Jammu the authorities rejected the nomination papers of the Praja Parishad, the opposition party, in 13 constituencies on the pretext that they were not properly presented. Thus, before the election date, Sheikh Abdullah was assured of 58 friendly members in the constituent Assembly. Three days before the elections in Jammu, on October 12, Praja Parishad announced boycott of the elections accusing the government of illegal practices and official interference, wholesale rejections of Parishad nomination papers. This gave National 15 seats. The last two contestants dropped out at the last moment. Before the polling began, therefore, Sheikh Abdullah's followers were sure of all 75 seats”. Scholar Sumantra Bose states that the manner of elections indicated that the National Conference elites wanted to govern

Jammu and Kashmir as a party state. Their slogan was “One Leader, One Party, One Programme”.

The two phenomena mentioned above, that is uncontested results and massive mandate for ruling party, continued till 1967. During the all the elections conducted from 1951 to 1962 the government machinery was completely and unhesitatingly used in support of the ruling party; opponents were disqualified on flimsy and frivolous grounds; Peace Brigade men were employed to intimidate voters; and when even strong arm methods failed, the ballot boxes were tampered with enabling polling officers to declare the victory of the National Conference party men.

Uncontested Results

Year of Assembly Election	The Ruling Party at that time	The percentage of the victories in favour of the ruling party
1951	National Conference	100.00%
1957	National Conference	90.66%
1962	National Conference	93.33%
1967	Indian National Congress	81.33%

3.2.4 EXTENSION OF INDIA’S ELECTION COMMISSION TO JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The efforts to reform the fraudulent electoral process in Jammu and Kashmir was initiated in late 1950s with the amendment to the “The Jammu and Kashmir Representation Act”, though its effects were somewhat visible only since late 1970s. The Jammu and Kashmir Representation of the People Act, 1957 paved the way to the extension Election Commission of India jurisdiction to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. By an amendment to Section 138 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir in 1959, the ‘Superintendence, direction and control’ of election to the Legislature of Jammu and Kashmir was delegated to the Election Commission of India. However, the functioning of the Election Commission of India in the State was not governed by

the Union laws but operates under the laws of the State. However, the State was at par with the rest of States with regard to the procedure for the Election of the President and Vice-President.

Since then, though in many respect the laws and rules of the state of J&K were modelled on the pattern and rules enshrined in the Indian Constitution, yet there were some basic differences between the two set of rules. The first such difference was in the context of delimitations of the constituencies. In rest of India a commission was needed to be constituted for readjusting the representation of the territorial constituencies of the state legislatures. However no such provision was required with regard to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Here the powers of delimitation rested with the Governor of the state.

The other difference was related to the election of the Members of the Parliament from the state. While Article 81(1) of the Indian Constitution provides for the direct election from territorial constituencies for election to the Parliament, however, in case of Jammu and Kashmir, the representatives were to be indirectly elected by the legislature of the state and appointed to Parliament by the President of India. This practice continued for almost two decades.

There was also a difference regarding the delimitation of the constituencies. Art 81 (2) (b) of Indian constitution provides that each state shall be divided into territorial constituencies in such a manner that the ratio between the population of each constituency and the number of seats allotted to it is, as far as practicable, the same throughout the state. But in case of Jammu and Kashmir, provision was made for dividing the state into single-member territorial constituencies in accordance with such procedure as the Delimitation Commission may deem fit. The delimitation commission's composition was also left at the disposal of the state legislature, which again was in variation from the Indian constitution. The rules and regulations for the preparation and publication of electoral rolls and for the entertainment of objections and claims were also delegated to the state authorities as per state laws. The People's Representation Act 1957 of the state constitution provided that Election Registrar could amend any entry according to his satisfaction.

The People's Representation Act, 1957 of State though was based on similar legislation applicable in the rest of India but the powers of the Election Commissioner were more limited than in the rest of India.

In order to safeguard the interests of certain classes the Indian constitution provides for reservation of seats for certain classes and schedule Tribes. However Art 325 to Article 334 providing such safeguards for adequate representation were not made applicable to the state of J&K. The reservation was later made for the Scheduled Castes. But as there were no officially recognized Scheduled Tribes in the State earlier, provision was not made for reservation of seats for them in the State Legislature. Article 342 of Constitution of India, which provides for reservation of seats for Scheduled Tribes is still not applicable to the state.

The constitution of Jammu & Kashmir also bars the interference by courts in electoral matters and hence such matters are left wholly on the discretion of returning officer with immunity from the court of law. As per the provisions of the People's Representation Act, 1957, the civil courts were barred from entertaining or adjudicating upon any question "whether any person is or is not entitled to be registered in an electoral roll for a constituency". The courts are also barred from "questioning the legality of any action taken by or under the authority of an electoral registrar or of any decision given by any authority appointed under this Act for the revision of any electoral rolls or any action taken or decision given by the returning officer or by any other person appointed under this Act in connection with an election." The present position of the jurisdiction of courts with regard to electoral matters is stated by Justice A S Anand as follows: "An election ends with the declaration of the results; if subsequently an election tribunal is set up, the High Courts are not barred from interference with its decision. However, since, 1967, it is the High Court alone which has the power to try an election petition". Section 142 of Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir deals with this matter.

3.2.5 FEATURES OF ELECTORAL PROCESS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The controversial nature of the electoral politics of Jammu and Kashmir makes it very difficult to draw an objective picture about it. However, one can make an effort to depict various processes of the electoral politics of the state. While some of the features can be located in the electoral process itself, many others have been directly related and influenced by the very political environment in the state. It is important therefore to pinpoint some of the peculiarities of the state politics, specifically those that had definite implications for the electoral process.

3.2.5.1 Legitimacy Crisis of Power Politics

First of all, it is important to point out the legitimacy crisis of the power politics, which evolved as early as 1953 when Sheikh Abdullah, the charismatic leader of the National Conference (the party responsible for the mass mobilization in Kashmir) was dismissed from power and arrested for a long time. Though in detention, Sheikh continued to be seen as the tallest leader of Kashmir. The political leadership that was meanwhile involved in the power politics could neither match the political stature of Sheikh nor could develop an independent politics for itself. Surviving with the support of the Central government, this leadership faced a legitimacy crisis that was extended to all modes of mainstream politics. Electoral politics also could not escape the brunt of this legitimacy crisis. From the beginning, it came to be seen as an instrument of central intervention and manipulation.

3.2.5.2 Fragility of the Party System

Secondly, the electoral politics suffered a setback due to the fragility of the party system. Of the various limitations from which the party politics of the state suffered, one important limitation related to a restricted nature of competition and an absence of politics of dissent and opposition. The state from the very beginning evolved a unique nature of politics in which the ruling party hegemonized the political space to such an extent that there was no possibility of effective opposition. Though this was generally the scene for whole Jammu and Kashmir, but it was much more so for the Valley. The ruling party came into power with massive majority monopolizing most of the electoral space.

However, the colossal strength of the ruling party after each successive election, was not based upon the popularity of this party as much as it was a result of a systematic and deliberate effort of the national leadership to restrict the dissenting and oppositional voices in Jammu and Kashmir to the minimum. There was a feeling on the part of the national leadership that the political situation in Kashmir was too fragile to allow a normal process of internal competition. The claim made on Kashmir by Pakistan on the one hand and the internal pressure of the separatist politics of the Plebiscite Front (led by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah) on the other, made the national leadership wary of any internal challenge to the ruling party from within in initial days of post-accession. However, the same political trend continued to even today.

3.2.5.3 Weak Oppositional Politics

Till the middle of sixties, the National Conference remained the only effective political party of the state in general and Valley of Kashmir in particular. The only opposition party that operated in the state was Praja Parishad, which was located in Jammu. Praja Parishad continued to operate till 1962 Assembly elections. Later it was merged into the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. Jana Sangh, did not extend itself to the state till the time the Praja Parishad was in existence. It operated through the Praja Parishad. For all practical purposes, the Praja Parishad was an extension of Jana Sangh in rest of India. Apart from Praja Parishad, there was no effective opposition party in the state. It is interesting to note that neither the Indian National Congress nor the Communist Party of India operated in Jammu and Kashmir for quite some time. Both chose to operate through the National Conference.

There arose a number of opportunities for the opposition to evolve within the Legislative Assembly, however, all these attempts were stifled. In 1957, thirteen dissenting NC MLAs led by G M Sadiq formed a party of their own viz. the Democratic National Conference. However, the party leaders, on the intervention of the Central leadership returned to the fold of National Conference.

3.2.5.4 Central intervention and Dependence on the Ruling Party in the Centre

In the absence of a genuine space for the oppositional politics within the mainstream politics, the democratic politics could not institutionalize itself. Ruling party rather than looking for support from the people started relying more on the support of the Central government. Gradually it became the norm that the power politics was determined more by the will of Centre rather than through the local support and mandate.

The popular perception that the power politics of the state was regulated by the Central government became more deep-rooted with the increasing intervention of the Central ruling party in the politics of the state. The local power structure rather than being defined by the logic of local politics came to be determined by the political convenience of the Central government. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed who had replaced Sheikh as the Prime Minister of the State in 1953, was conveniently sidelined in 1962 under the garb of 'Kamraj Plan'. The process of nominating or replacing the political leadership of the state as per the expediency of the Centre continued in

the later period. In 1975, Mir Qasim, the Chief Minister of the Congress-led government was asked to step down to make space for Sheikh Abdullah who was brought back to power under an Accord that the Central leadership made with him. However, very soon the Congress party withdrew the support that it had offered to him in 1977. In 1984, the Congress party succeeded in overthrowing the NC government led by Farooq Abdullah even when it had received a massive mandate in a keenly contested Assembly election in 1983. A Congress supported government of the NC-defectors led by G M Shah replaced this government. G M Shah's government was similarly overthrown as the Congress party in the Centre decided to go in for an alliance with the National Conference.

The Central intervention went much beyond this and resulted in changing the basic principles of Centre-State relations. The logic of Autonomy guaranteed under the Article 370 of Indian Constitution was compromised as many provisions of Constitution of India were extended to the state. Such extension was beyond the scope of the 1952 Delhi Agreement between Sheikh Abdullah and Jawaharlal Nehru. By mid-sixties, substantial changes were made even in the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir. The sixth Amendment to the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir changed the nomenclature of Prime Minister and Sadar-e-Riyasat. Prime Minister was now to be named as the Chief Minister. In place of Sadar-e-Riyasat, who was till now elected by the state legislature, there was to be the office of Governor. He was to be a nominee of the Centre and was to be appointed by the President of India. Meanwhile, the Congress party, which had hitherto no formal political existence in the state, became the ruling party in the state as the ruling National Conference dissolved itself and merged with the Congress. All these developments took place at a time when the legitimacy of the local elite was seriously contested.

3.2.6 LET US SUM UP

By this time, you must have understood that the democratic situation in Kashmir from the beginning was not an ideal one. The period 1947-53 was one of transition and the democratic political structures were yet to fully institutionalise. This resulted in manipulated electioneering. During the first general election for the Legislative cum Constituent Assembly, all the seats were captured by the National Conference. After the dismissal and imprisonment of Sheikh Abdullah, the electoral politics in the post-1953 period lost whatever democratic content it

earlier had. The manoeuvring of the electoral process insulated the democratic politics from the mass response. Though elections were held at regular frequency of five years, yet there was nothing that enthused the voters. With most candidates getting elected uncontested, the whole process bypassed the people. However, the 1977 assembly elections and elections conducted from 2002 onwards somewhat erased the past negative record and brought back credibility to electoral politics in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Now many people, in the state, national and internationally, lauding Election Commission of India for making serious efforts to conduct a fair and free elections so that a true representatives of the people can be elected.

3.2.7 EXERCISE

7. The uncontested results and massive majorities undermined the legitimacy of government in Jammu and Kashmir for a long time. Comment.
8. Write a note on main features of Electoral Process in Jammu and Kashmir.

3.3 POLITICS OF MARGINAL GROUPS: WOMEN, DALITS AND TRIBES

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

3.3.0 Objectives

3.3.1 Introduction

3.3.2 The Status of Women in Jammu and Kashmir

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3.3.3.3 Summing Up

3.3.4 Tribes: Social and Political Dynamics

3.3.4.1 Demographic Composition

3.3.4.2 Social and Political Assertion

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3.3.5 Let Us Sum UP

3.3.6 Exercise

3.3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson, you will study the issues related to vulnerable groups in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly Women, Dalits and Tribes. After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- the status of women, their political participation and representation in political institutions including political parties;
- the issues of dalit empowerment and reasons for their relative social empowerment compare with their counterparts in other states of India; and
- the status of tribes in Jammu and Kashmir and their demographic and political presence.

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the Women, Dalits and Tribes are the most backward groups and their political involvement in the state is minimal. They constitute a large number in terms of the population of the State but their representation in the political sphere is almost close to insignificant. The larger political identity in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is based on religion, caste and regional divide. The marginal groups in the State of Jammu and Kashmir do not hold ample representation, whether it is the national, state or local level politics, compare to their ratio of population. They are not actively engaged in the political sphere of the state. This present lacuna of their representation in state can be attributed to multiple factors, most of which are patriarchal and caste based stereotypes. There are certain internal inhibitions also that keep them away from the politics. The lime light politics in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is enjoyed and practiced by males, especially from the caste group of Brahmin and Rajputs in case of Hindu majority areas of Jammu region and Sayeed from Valley in Muslim majority areas. These particular caste, class or regional groups are holding well of social, political and economic background which helps them to establish their political carrier in the state. There are certain situations which have pushed these marginal groups in politics and gradually they are learning and making their mark. Not to mention, many of the constitutional safeguards have improved their status to some extent.

Politics is an important instrument for the emancipation and empowerment. The present chapter discusses the factors responsible for the politics of the marginal group in the state from different periods till present and analyses whether there is a change or not.

3.3.2 THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Politics in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, like any other Indian states is dominated by men. Women not only remain at the fringes of society but are also marginalised in politics. Patriarchal context of women's lives inhibits their role both in society as well as in politics. The gender division of roles, which places politics in the public domain and therefore outside the legitimate domestic sphere where women are expected to operate, makes it difficult for women to use the political sphere for their own emancipation or for the betterment of other's lives. Of all the occupations that lie in the public sphere, politics is the least desired sphere for women.

The overall politics of women in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in different walks of life is not pleasing. This is despite their active participation in the freedom struggle of Kashmir, the legal and constitutional recognition of women's rights. Throughout the State, the women continue to be under-privileged and backward which is unambiguously revealed from the available data on various indices including literacy, demographic situation, employment, political participation, etc. As per the data provided by the Census Report of 2011, the women in the state of Jammu and Kashmir constitute 57 per cent of total population, the percentage of female literates is 56.43 per cent compare to 76.75 of male literacy rate; even it is less than all India average which is 65.46 per cent. This lower level of literacy of women reflects their state of marginalization. Lower literacy affects at other indices of development. Thus, the number of women who go for higher education, professional education, employment and other related areas, is relatively lower as compared to the national figures.

Most of the women movements all over the country that started in the eighties have not touched women of Jammu and Kashmir. There is also no organised women's response. The women are not able to reap the benefits of various legal and structural changes that have been taking place elsewhere in the country. For example, the jurisdiction of the Women's Commission of India does not extend to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Though the State has its own Women's Commission, it has not been able to match the achievements of its counterpart

in the rest of India. While in the rest of India, women have joined Panchayats in large numbers; in Jammu and Kashmir women have not had a chance to be politically active at the grass-root level. Only recently, an amendment has incorporated to provide reservation for women in the elections. The vulnerability of women the State can be further seen in relation to their status as a 'State Subject' or the Permanent Resident. It is in such contexts that the role of women in the political sphere of the state becomes more important.

In the post-accession period of Jammu and Kashmir, the democratic politics in the State remained problematic as the legitimacy of electoral politics was contested from the very beginning. While in the rest of India various marginal groups were getting increasingly politicized through each electoral exercise, in the case of Jammu and Kashmir, electoral process did not touch the people at all. Ironically, this was the time when crucial political developments did take place in the State.

Likewise, the separatist politics which have dominated the political space, especially in the Kashmir region, has remained dominated by the men. The All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) which is the largest conglomeration of various separatist groups has only one women organisation namely, Khawateen Markaz, and which has played only a nominal role in the separatist political agenda. Even some of the groups of APHC consider themselves as the protector of women by shadowing them from the deteriorating nature of current politics. The various militant groups like Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HUM), Al-Jehad, etc., with no women as their members justify that women cannot fight as they have their roles confined within the four walls of the home.

The society in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is also persisting with the ideology of the feudal and patriarchal notion. Women in the state are still living beneath the veil of patriarchy. The patriarchal mindset of society has confined women to a limited space. The society in the state do not allow women to continue the political activities or as activist of any party as it is against in the patriarchal structure of the society. Even though every political party give tickets to women but their working for the women section is in dual position. Today the society is moving forward with the technological and information sector revolution but the condition of women still remain where it was centuries ago. Very little has changed in their mobility and education set up. The women, even in the 21st century are not considered fit as the leader of the people. In

the political sphere the reservation of seats is made for women but they are acting as puppets in the hands of the patriarchy and the women are not making proper use of their powers.

3.3.2.1 Reservation for Women in Political Sphere

The Bill regarding grant of 33 percent reservation to fair sex is hanging in balance in the Parliament for last many years with political parties reaching no consensus on the issue, the mainstream political parties in J&K have also not given more than four to five per cent reservation to women folk in Assembly elections. This shows the insensitiveness of the political system in the country towards half of the citizens of the country. Though women constituted about half of total population, grant of only 33 percent reservation in representative bodies like Parliament and State Assemblies is itself biased in giving justice to the fair sex. The political parties in J&K like other parts of the country have also failed to give due representation to women folk in the Assembly elections in the State.

3.3.2.2 Women's Political Participation and Representation

The Jammu and Kashmir State has gone through a phase of very radical resistance movement. During this movement, the rights of the underprivileged sections of the society, including peasantry, workers, and women formed the most crucial part of the political discourse. Anti-monarchical and anti-feudal movement led by the National Conference had adopted the 'New Kashmir Manifesto' in 1944. This manifesto contained an exclusive Women's charter. This Women's charter was very ambitious and advocated the principles of equality and justice for women in social, economic and political sphere. But, the failure of political parties in giving due representation to them while fielding candidates revealed that women have to still struggle for decades together to seek their rights. The national parties at the Centre which claim to be the champion of women cause have also failed to give justice to them in the Assembly elections in the State. Not to talk of giving mandate to 33 percent women in the Assembly elections in the State, the national parties have failed to field more than five percent female candidates in the Assembly poll. The data reveals that out of 76 seats contested by the Party in the State it has given mandate to three female candidates.

3.3.2.3 Women Participation in Recent Assembly Election

People's Democratic Party (PDP) which is headed by a female, Mehbooba Mufti, is also not sensitive towards fair sex as it has fielded only one candidate in Assembly poll. Congress, which is also headed by a woman as its national president is sailing in the same boat. The Party has fielded three women candidates from the State though it contested all the 87 seats. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) too is headed by a woman (Mayawati) but it fielded only one candidate in the Assembly elections. National Conference (NC) however, has been relatively holding a better record by fielding six candidates in the State which is double the number of Congress and BJP. The Jammu and Kashmir National Panther Party (JKNPP) has fielded two candidates. It is unfortunate to see that political parties in J&K have failed to give due representation to women in the selection of candidates.

The women and men are two wheels of the society and no society can progress when one wheel becomes dominating over the other. Women have been deprived of their due share. The women have proved to be good Prime Ministers, Chief Ministers, Governors as well as bureaucrats but still they are deprived of their due right by the male dominated society. Instead of giving 50 per cent representation to women in all fields, the political parties have even failed to give them 33 per cent representation in Parliament and State Assemblies and it is a cause of concern.

3.3.2.4 Women in Casting Votes

The participation of women in the electoral process in general and casting of votes in particular have not made significant progress. Especially in the Kashmir Province and some parts of the Jammu Province, women did not find many opportunities to visit the polling booths. Till the fourth general elections, there were many constituencies which had not gone for an electoral contest even for once. From this period onwards, a remarkable trend of more and more women coming out of their homes to take part in election rallies have been noticed. However, the swing ends there because when it comes to representation, women candidates account for a dismal 3 per cent. In the elections to the 87-member state Assembly, there are just 12 female candidates, with six of them from the ruling National Conference (NC). More than 300 candidates have been fielded by all the four parties - NC, PDP, Congress and the BJP - in the polls.

3.3.2.5 Status of Women in Panchayats

Out of 4128 Sarpanches posts in the 22 districts of the State, only 29 women managed to win the elections with a dismal success rate of less than one per cent (0.70 per cent). According to the data compiled by the Chief Electoral Officer of the State, there is no woman Sarpanch in 10 of the 22 districts as male candidates have won the elections for all the posts in these districts. Out of the 10 districts in the Valley, eight districts do not have a single woman Sarpanch. Baramulla in north Kashmir and Anantnag and Shopian in south Kashmir have been the saving-grace but the three districts have elected just four women as Sarpanches out of 453 posts. Surprisingly, Leh district, of the State, where women are considered to be far more assertive than their counterparts in other districts, has also failed to elect woman Sarpanches. The only district in the Jammu division not to elect any woman as Sarpanch is Kishtwar. The remaining nine districts of the Jammu region have representation of women as Sarpanches but again the percentage of winners is negligible.

3.3.2.6 Summing Up

The political sphere in the Jammu and Kashmir has been in a state of flux. And as a part of society the women have been affected by the changing situations as men were. The women in post-1947 electoral period also have not been able to reap the benefits of gender-friendly vision underlying in the 'New Kashmir Manifesto'. In addition, the society's role in encouraging women to take part in politics is not fitting and the women themselves have been a mute spectator in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir. Even in the 21st century, this gap between the male and female is still persisting at the ground level. Moreover, without empowering the women at the basic level, it is not possible to change the present society and the mind-set which is ruled by patriarchal notion.

3.3.3 DALITS: COMPOSITION AND IDENTITY

The State of Jammu and Kashmir has three main administrative parts—Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh—each of which is culturally, politically, and linguistically distinct. The SC population of the state is mostly concentrated in Jammu region. Jammu has a majority Hindu population

(approximately 65%) with adequate religious and political diversities, dalits do not form a cohesive community; they are spread out in various other parts of Jammu and are culturally differentiated. They constitute a sizeable 17.44% of Jammu's population, but are divided into 13 sub-castes, of which Megh, Chamar, and Doom are numerically predominant forming 39%, 24%, and 21%, respectively, of the total dalits population.

3.3.3.1 Demographic Composition

The SCs are overwhelmingly rural, as many as 82.6 per cent of them reside in rural areas. District wise distribution of the SC population shows that they have maximum concentration in Samba and Jammu districts with a share of 28.82 and 24.76 per cent respectively, followed by Udhampur (24.95 per cent) and Kathua district (22.94 per cent). The Kashmir region has a meagre SC population. Four districts of Kashmir region have recorded SC population below 500. Of these, in each of Shoy pian and Kulgam districts the population of SCs is less than 100. This clearly indicates the SC population is overwhelmingly concentrated in the Jammu region, especially in the districts that are bordering Punjab.

3.3.3.2 Dalit Subjectivity

The unique historical context of Jammu and Kashmir has left its own specificities in the formation or construction of identities, particularly for Dalits. In a predominantly Muslim dominated State of Jammu and Kashmir, religion often played a crucial role in the formation of other identities as well. Since Hindus are minority in a religious polarized State, the dominant sections of the Hindu society, especially the upper castes, did not strictly practice the rigid social stratification for which Hindu society is known for. Fearful of conversions, they had shown tremendous flexibility and liberalism towards caste based practices. For instance, Maharaja Hari Singh was the first one who granted to Dalits the access to temples and other public places and admission in government schools way back in 1931-32. This removal of legal restrictions on the Harijan entry in public places was probably the first in princely states of India. Similarly, 'untouchability' was abolished in the state legally long before Mahatma Gandhi took up the same. Similarly, many Hindu reformist organizations that were established in the State in early twentieth century attempted to infuse cohesion among the Hindus by undermining some of the

social practices of segregation. This historical context has significant influence on the formation of Dalit consciousness.

The dalits like other marginal groups are not detached from the dominant politics of the State but rather participate despite the exclusion of the issues related to their group. While the community to a large extent identifies and collaborates with upper-castes and other entrenched Hindu sections at the political level, they form relatively more visible strategies of resistance vis-à-vis these sections in the everyday social realm where oppression is more direct and explicit. Moreover, rather than a complete disconnect between these two realms, the political and social responses of dalits blend and influence one another. The social context and everyday performance of these multiple identities help us appreciate dalits political perceptions and subsequent collaborations with the largely upper-caste political discourse that assumes anti-Kashmir positions. Yet, there are significant differences in the ways resistance operates at the social and political levels.

The Megh, Chamar, and Doom, the three sub-castes among the dalits in the Jammu region, are relatively better organized politically and more educated than the rest of the sub-castes. The remaining sub-castes are Batwal, Barwala, Basith, Saryala, Chura, Dhyar, Gardi, Jolaha, Ratal, and Watal are socially marginalized and economically backward communities.

The dalits in Jammu are not politically organized to assert their caste and class interests. Despite their caste interests—such as their attempts to escape physical and social marginalization as well as stigmatization by upper- and middle-caste Hindus—dalits also emphasize their class concerns, confronting various forms of economic exclusion and impoverishment. The issues concerning the dalits are often closely linked with the concerns of the dalits in the whole country, such as the concentration of their large number of population in low paying or menial jobs, indicating a fortification of their low caste and class status to a large extent.

However, the dalits are not politically organized enough to powerfully voice these concerns. They largely identify themselves with the mainstream conflict-based politics of Jammu and Kashmir State.

Kashmiri struggle against the monarchy led to its abolition and the establishment of participatory democracy in the State. The National Conference, under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah, introduced sweeping economic changes and radical land reforms which weakened

upper-caste dominance in the state and diluted caste oppression in society to some extent. Due to these alterations, dalits have been able to improve their socio-economic position in the post-independence period. An improvement in the status of dalits is also reflected in their level of literacy, which has increased from 12% in 1971 to 59% in 2001. This is also a result of the affirmative action policy that reserved government jobs for dalits. Though very few members of community could reach the higher ranks of bureaucracy, there were many who were able to benefit from low cadre government jobs. This has helped create a lower middle class layer of dalits and, over the generations, a small urban middle class also.

However, this does not indicate that the situation of all members of the community has improved. Over a period of more than sixty years a vast section of SCs continues to remain at the economic margins. In fact, a bulk of the dalits population still serves as marginal workers in low-paying occupations. The dilution of traditional structures of caste oppression, while reducing caste-based extremities such as physical violence, has not wiped away many other related ills, which include exclusion and oppression in everyday life.

3.3.3.3 Summing Up

Though, the policy of reservation is present in the society but its fruits is being enjoyed by a very few among them. The political set up of the group is also existent at a minute level with very few representatives at the helm of the affairs. Dalits practice Hindu religion custom in their daily lives. However, majority of them are engaged themselves in the menial activities like broom making, basket making and leaflet plates in the villages of Jammu regions. The caste baste discrimination still persists; no inter-caste and inter-dinning functions are organized with this caste group. The political representation of the Dalits in the state is from only those constituencies which are reserved for this section of the population. Ironically, Dalits in the state of Jammu and Kashmir are living on the edge and are still facing discriminations made by the upper caste class people.

3.3.4 TRIBES: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DYNAMICS

According to 2011 census, the Tribal population in Jammu and Kashmir is 14,93,299 comprising 11.9% of total population. The tribes in the state reside in the hilly areas. They majority of the

tribals are Gujjars, Bakwarwal and Gaddhis, majority of them are Muslims; only Gaddhi group of tribes practices Hindu religious traditions and cultural customs. The socio economic condition of the tribe group in the state is in the edge of the political discourse. The educational status of the tribes in the state is also at the margin; majority of the dropouts are from this group. Even the reservation available to them is not working in their advantage as most of them are not in position to take benefit out of them. Majority of the tribal population engages in the nomadic and cattle rearing activities they rear goat, sheep, and buffalos in the state. The main source of the income is through this medium. The representation of the tribes in the state is negligible in the election sphere of national, state and local level.

3.3.4.1 Demographic Composition

As per to 1931 census, Gujjars were the third largest linguistic group and second largest ethnic group in the region. If language is criteria, then after Kashmiri and Dogri, there is maximum population of Gujjars in the state. Ethnically, they have second largest population after Kashmiri whereas Rajputs both Hindu and Muslim form third largest ethnic entity of the state. This fact is also relevant even in today's politics of Jammu and Kashmir. As far as the history is concerned, Jammu and its surrounding districts were covered by Gujjars and had emerged as a significant political, social and cultural force even before 1947. There were many habitations of Gujjars in main towns and cities besides the surrounding areas of Jammu region. But the partition of the state resulted in large scale migration of which eventually changed the demographic character of the State. In the post-independence period, various races and groups appeared on the socio-political scene of the state but Gujjars who were pushed to remote and far flung areas lacked in all walks of life. All linguistic and ethnic groups progressed in one or the other way but this was not the case with Gujjars.

Gujjars are mainly divided between those who continue to pursue a nomadic life and those who are settled on land. Those who are nomadic practice transhumance or seasonal migration with their livestock and are further classified into two categories – the Baniharas and the Bakerwals. While the Bakerwals are entirely nomadic, the Dodhi Gujjars are semi-nomadic. The two categories follow different paths of grazing. Many of the Gujjars of Kashmir, rather than the permanent residents of the Valley, are the seasonal migrants to the valley and come

from Jammu province through the Pir Panjal range. They move back to Jammu province during the winter period. Besides the Dodhi Gujjars and Bakerwals who are basically nomadic, there are other sedentary and settled groups also. These groups have settled in the routes of various migration passes. They can be traced in large numbers in Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Udhampur and Kandi areas of Jammu region and Kupwara, Ganganagar, Pahalgam etc. in Kashmir division.

The Gujjars form a distinct identity in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Despite their stay in Jammu and Kashmir for centuries, they have maintained their distinction in terms of their language, customs and culture. Notwithstanding the fact that Gujjars follow the religion of Islam, yet they assert their distinct identity vis-à-vis the other Kashmiris and Jammu Muslims.

3.3.4.2 Social and Political Assertion

Despite their backwardness, the Gujjars have been asserting their cultural, tribal and political identity. The cultural, linguistic and tribal identity markers are privileged to assert the distinctiveness of their group identity. The *Gujjar* identity is invoked to carve a special and distinctive space for the group which not only claims to have a distinguished historical antecedent but also a racial, cultural, linguistic and tribal cohesiveness. Though the Gujjars, all of them being Muslims, are very religious, yet religion does not become the primary marker of their identity. Asserting their distinctive identity, they differentiate themselves from other Muslims of the State.

The politics of Gujjar identity has been revolving around certain demands. These demands have been ranging from the socio-economic empowerment and the modernisation of the community to the political representation. The demand for socio-economic empowerment arises from the very basic context of backwardness, arising mainly due to the nomadic nature of their lifestyle as well as their existence on the edges of the society. Of all the communities in Jammu and Kashmir, the Gujjars are among the most backward ones. They have been asserting their identity as a separate tribal identity and have been demanding reservation for them in the educational institutions, in the state employment and in the Legislative Assembly.

Keeping in view the backwardness of Gujjars, especially those who continue to be nomadic, the community leadership has been demanding special attention. To cater to such a demand, a board for development of Gujjars, namely Jammu and Kashmir Gujjars and Bakerwals Development Advisory Board, was constituted.

Before this, the Gujjars politics has been mostly unorganised. It was only when “All Jammu and Kashmir Gujjar Islahi Sudhar Sabha” was formed under the Presidentship of Haji Mohammed Israil that their problems were highlighted. Besides this, a number of other organisations emerged like “All India Gujjar Sudhar Sabha”. A Branch of this organization was established in Jammu and Kashmir under the Presidentship of Choudhary Gulzar Ahmed. This organization worked from 1960-71. In the beginning, this organization had no affiliation with any political party but later on it got affiliated to the Congress. Another organization of the Gujjars was the Gujjar Youth Federation, which mostly consisted of newly educated youth of the state. All these Organizations from time to time raised some basic issues relating to their community.

The Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir state were first politicized in 1970s when the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi cultivated them and proposed them up as the possible counter weight to the valley Muslims. The recognition of Gojri language and allocation of time on Jammu and Kashmir radio for its program was the first step in this direction. Though it was genuine demand of the community but came as the political concession from the government of India.

The demand of Gujjars and Bakerwals for scheduled tribe status under the Indian constitution took a long time to fructify and it was during the Chandra Shekhar government in 1991 that the Scheduled tribe status was finally provided. But, the same status for the Gujjars of the neighbouring State of Himachal Pradesh was provided in 1950.

Even after the two decades of having scheduled tribe status the socioeconomic status of Gujjars and Bakerwals is miserable. Their literacy rate is among the lowest in the State, while the infant mortality rate is highest. Majority of the community is living the nomadic life without any permanent settlement and those who are settled make their livelihood out of casual labour and domestic service etc.

Although, the representation of the Gujjars in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is not proportional to their population, it is subsequently representation in the State Legislative Assembly. There are six districts across Jammu and Kashmir, where the Gujjars constitute substantial portion of populace. There are 23 Assembly Constituencies (8 in Jammu region and 15 in Kashmir) and two Parliamentary Constituencies (One is Kashmir- Baramullah another is Jammu Poonch) where the Gujjars play a decisive role in elections. In a number of these assembly constituencies, the Gujjars and Bakarwals form a majority.

In the process of identity formation certain voluntary organization and institution of Gujjars and Bakerwals are trying to promote their identity. The Gujjars of state have taken some steps to found certain premier political and social organisations like “Jammu and Kashmir united front,” and “Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust,”. These organisations and institution were established to improve the socio-cultural life of Gujjars and Bakerwals also and to preserve their culture, tradition, custom etc, and to put pressure on the authorities to consider their rational demands and redress their genuine grievances.

At the political level there is a feeling of exploitation among the Gujjars and Bakerwals of Jammu and Kashmir state by the politically articulated leaders of other communities. The recognition of Gujjars and Bakerwal as scheduled tribe was a major achievement in the process of identity politics. This status has enabled them to get the advantage of reservation in government jobs as well as in education institutions, including the technical and professional institutions. However, the discontentment and grievances are still there for the politically discrimination. This is due to the reason that the provisions of the article 342 of Indian constitution as incorporated in section 50, sub-section 6 of the Jammu and Kashmir constitution have not been fully applied to this state. These provisions contains for reservation of seats for scheduled tribe in the Lok Sabha, the state legislative assembly and the State legislative council. There is provision for political reservation of seats in the parliament and state legislature for scheduled tribe and scheduled caste as per the article 330 and 332 .All the state of Indian union except the state of Jammu and Kashmir, have the provision for political reservation according to the population of scheduled tribe and scheduled caste. This demand for political reservation is the major demand of this community as they want the implementation of article 330 and 332 of Indian constitution which means reservation of seats in house of people and state legislature respectively.

3.3.4.3 Summing Up

The politics of tribal identity has been revolving around certain demands. These demands have been ranging from the socio-economic empowerment and political modernisation of the community. Such demands were arising mainly due to the nomadic nature of their lifestyle as well as their existence on the edges of the society. However, the fulfilment of the demand for the grant of ST status has opened way for other demands as well.

3.3.5 LET US SUM UP

This lesson analyses the status of marginal groups in the State of Jammu and Kashmir: Women, Dalits and Tribes. As you have understood, the status of women is suffered due to patriarchy and strong influence of traditional values. Participation of women in politics is still considered as not respectful which is leading their low participation. Probably Jammu and Kashmir is one of the states where political participation of the women is very less. Non-implementation of the 73rd Amendment also had its own effect as the participation of women in Panchayats is the lowest in the country. However, the recent decision of the state government to extend reservation to women might change the scenario in the future. With regard to Dalits, the oppression and untouchability practices in other parts of the country is not prevalent in the State. Due to Muslim majority nature of the state, fears of further conversions, operated to accommodate dalits in larger social milieu. Hence, the social and class divisions that are visible elsewhere are missing in the State, which resulted in low political consciousness. The tribes of Jammu and Kashmir are one of the most vulnerable groups in the society. Poverty and illiteracy was still high among them. Their education status is very poor with high dropout rate. However, recent periods have witnessed social and political assertion of tribes in the state demanding more representation and participation in political and administrative institutions.

3.3.6 EXERCISE

1. Why the political participation of women in Jammu and Kashmir is very less compare to their counterparts in other status of India.
2. Critically analyse the reasons for low representations Dalits in the governing bodies of the state despite their social empowerment.
3. Write a note on tribes of Jammu and Kashmir.

3.4 LAND REFORMS: POLITICS AND IMPACT

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

3.4.0 Objectives

3.4.1 Introduction

3.4.2 Land Reforms: The Historical Context

3.4.3 Land Reforms, 1950

3.4.4 The Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms Act, 1972

3.4.5 Land Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir: A Critical Review

3.4.6 Let Us Sum UP

3.4.7 Sources

3.4.8 Exercise

3.4.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson explains one of the progress steps initiated by the government of Jammu and Kashmir related to Land Reforms. After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- trace the history of land reforms in Jammu and Kashmir;
- know the agrarian reforms after 1948 initiated by the new democratic government;
- acquainted with the Jammu and Kashmir agrarian reforms act; and
- understand politics surrounded around land reform issues.

3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Land reform refers to the redistribution of land from the rich to the poor. More broadly, it includes the regulation of ownership, operation, leasing, sales, and inheritance of land. In an

agrarian economy such as India, with great scarcity and unequal distribution of land, coupled with a large mass of the rural population below the poverty line, there are compelling economic and political arguments for land reform. Not surprisingly, it received top priority on the policy agenda at the time of the Indian Independence in 1947 considering the benefits it can offer to the farmers as well as to the economic growth of the country.

Most importantly, land reform is not simply a question of social justice. On it depends the solution to manifold problems of economic development. Success or failure of land reform measures should be judged by such criteria as whether surplus land has been taken away, and whether it has been distributed, whether the tenants are really protected.

When India became independent and Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India was complete, the political leadership of India as well as in Jammu and Kashmir sincerely wished to initiate land reforms to transfer the land to those who were actually tilling. However, it was in Jammu and Kashmir that the most radical land reforms were conceived and implemented. No other state in India was as successful as Jammu and Kashmir in terms of implementing the land reforms. The restructuring of the land had huge impact on the social, economic and political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir by empowering and liberating ordinary masses. It is not an exaggeration to state that there is no family in Jammu and Kashmir without a piece of land after the land reforms. Hence, in this lesson we will try to understand the issues related to land reforms in Jammu and Kashmir, the ideology behind these reforms, the leadership role, the way it has been implemented and its impact on ordinary masses.

3.4.2 LAND REFORMS: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Jammu and Kashmir was primarily an agrarian State, with 90 % of its population, before 1947, lived in villages with agriculture as their main livelihood. The agrarian system in the state was basically feudal in character and cultivators suffered greatly due to heavy taxation and levy in kind. Only those who pleased the kings were bestowed with land in the form of Jagirs. Under Maharaja, like any other monarchy at that time in India, land belonged to the State with the Maharaja as the sole claimant with powers to distribute it to whomever he wished. This led to the concentration of large tracts of land in few hands resulting in large scale farming and the creation of an intermediate class. The peasants who cultivated the lands had no proprietorship rights at all

and, hence, could not sell or transfer the land they were cultivating. They were working like agricultural labourer under a management system dominated by Jaghirdars and Zamindars. The proprietorship of jagirs could be only conferred by the Darbar by *sanad* (official document) and the grantees were invariably the relatives, courtiers and top officialdom of the Darbar. Concentration of land in the hands of absentee landlords coupled with unprotected tenancy rights, arbitrary and sometimes even forcible ejection of tenants by landlords, underutilization of cultivable land and increasing exploitation of peasantry under the garb of high taxation policy were the main features of this agrarian system.

3.4.2.1 Initial Reforms

The initial reforms, including land reforms, in Jammu and Kashmir were initiated when British Resident was appointed to the State in 1855. The permanent British constituted and headed the Council of Regency through which the British exercised their assertive control over the monarchical administration to bring out social, political and economic reforms. Two residents Andrew Wingate and Walter Roper Lawrence initiated some far-reaching changes with regard to land tenure and tenancy relationships towards the end of 19th century. Wingate advised the Maharaja to delegate the possession rights to the farmers over the land they were tilling, in order to gain their support and legitimacy, that is the hereditary occupancy rights in the land against the ownership of the State/Ruler. Lawrence moved a step farther and recommended for occupancy rights with sale, mortgage, lease, etc. Due to the efforts of these British officers, Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1895-1896 legally recognised the hereditary occupancy rights of the peasants over the land.

These initial land reforms also legalised another class with legitimate rights over the land. The cultivator who was recognised by the Darbar as lawful occupant, after these reforms, was called the *assami* which was decided on the basis of his hereditary cultivation rights of the land. In this way the British brought a new *Zamindari* structure into Jammu and Kashmir, the way they had done in other parts of India. In Kashmir, before the said land settlements of 1887-1891 & 1889-1894, the landlords had no proprietary rights on the land as ownership vested with the Maharaja only. Nor were they recognised as *assimidars*. But Wingate and Lawrence made those powerful and influential intermediary proprietors or landlords as *assimidars* of the land which

was legally accepted by the Darbar in 1900. These reforms, in reality, worked against the peasants as they were declared mere permanent tenants-at-will who held tenancy subjecting to the will of the landlords. This led to a huge resentment among the peasants who were actually tilling the land. Hence, to prevent the easy removal of the tenants-at-will, the Maharaja had to pass the Tenancy Act, 1923, under which the landlord could eject the tenant only after filing a petition before the court on specific grounds. The Act stated that their ejection from the land could be filed before the court on certain specified grounds only, such as the land was unfit for cultivation or the tenant has failed to cultivate the land or pay the rent (lagaan) to the landlord or the landlord required it for personal use.

The reforms in agrarian relations were further initiated as a result of the 1931 mass movement by Kashmiris against monarchy. This movement led to the constitution of Glancy Commission. Glancy Commission made several recommendations, some of which are related to land reforms. The Glancy Commission without eliminating the Jaghirdars and Zamindars, however, recommended for the transfer of property rights of the land to the peasants wherever these rights were vested in the state. Accordingly, the Maharaja empowered the farmers who had occupancy rights with full property rights on the lands they are tilling. The Maharaja also initiated further measures, as per the Glancy Commission recommendation, to prevent large farmers, business and propertied classes buying out the land of poor farmers by passing the Land Alienation Act, 1933 and the Right of Prior Purchase Act, 1937 as per which a peasant was not allowed to sell more than one fourth of his land, and a peasant had to sell his land only to another farmer.

Despite these reforms, still a large chunk of the land remained under the control of Jaghirdars and Zamindars. Most of the peasants who were actually tilling the land are not having either occupancy or property rights over the land that they were tilling. More than 50 % of cultivable land was still under the control of large feudal landlords with Maharaja having the property rights.

3.4.2.2 New Kashmir Manifesto

Agrarian reforms in post-Independence Kashmir were carried out against the backdrop of the Quit Kashmir Movement (a non-violent movement under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah

launched against the Maharaja). The movement drew its main strength from the oppressed peasantry which was promised self-rule along with land-to-the-tiller. In its annual session in 1944, the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, while pursuing its goal of Responsible Government, publicly set forth its radical plan of transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a welfare state. The *New Kashmir Manifesto* or Naya Kashmir plan, as it came to be known, proposed a complete re-modelling of the social, economic and political structures of the State, more or less on the pattern of State-led socialism. In its economic dimension, the Plan envisaged a society free from landlordism, autocracy, monopolies, wide income gap, exploitation of the peasantry and labouring classes, indebtedness. The *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* promised land to the tiller and cooperative association of tillers to regulate production and sale of crops and agricultural goods. The radical restructuring of land and land relations where land was transferred to the actual tiller with a 'bundle of rights' of permanent nature, without any compensation being paid to the original owner of the land.

3.4.3 LAND REFORMS, 1950

The National Conference Government came into power in March, 1948. The agrarian reforms were carried out in three stages: firstly, by abolishing all 'feudal' privileges like jagirs, muafis, and mukkarraries; secondly, by transferring the land, acquired through the abolition of these privileges, to the tillers; and thirdly, through the introduction of co-operative societies. The abolition of landlordism was essentially the first step towards the founding of a new social order.

3.4.3.1 First Phase of Reforms, 1948: Abolition of Feudal Institutions

Immediately after coming to power the government initiated its first set of reforms in 1948 by abolishing all feudal institutions such as Jagirs, muafidars and mukkarraree-khwars (recipients of cash grants). As a result of this enactment, 396 Jagirdars and 2347 Mukarraridars disappeared from the rural areana. It relieved peasant from the crushing burden of payment in kind and released 4250 acres in favour of the tillers. Moreover, in the jurisdictional jagirs of the state also 2.5 lakh people gained freedom from the subjection of the jaghirdars. These tillers got property rights over the land that they were tilling. Probably the most significant achievement is to be

seen in the case of Poonch and Chenani, two jurisdictional jagirs, where the jagirdar enjoyed powers almost equivalent to that of the ruler of the State.

3.4.3.2 The Second Phase, 1948: Protecting the Interests of Tenants

The next round of reforms began in October 1948 when the government amended the State Tenancy Act of 1924. Subsequent amendments were made in the Act in 1950 and 1952. As part of these reforms, tenants-at-will were granted fixed tenure over holdings not exceeding 2.5 acres (17 kanals) of wet land and 4.5 acres (33 kanals) of dry land in the Kashmir valley and almost double this size in respect of both the categories in the Jammu division due to predominant nature of dry land in the area. The Tenancy Act provided for extracting minimal rents in land. Maximum rent on holdings exceeding 12.5 acres, was fixed at one-fourth of the produce in case of wet land and one third in case of dry land. However, in case of tenancies not exceeding 12.5 acres (100 kanals) the tenants could keep half of the produce while the other half would go to the landlord. Subsequently tenants were granted more security against ejection through amendments/changes in the relevant acts in 1955, 1960, 1965 and 1970. The tenancy reforms are estimated to have benefited three-fifths of the peasants cultivating 700,000 acres of land. The Act created a new class of tenants called 'protected tenants'.

3.4.3.3 Third Stage of Land Reforms, 1950: Abolition of Big Landed Estates

The most significant land reform law, which was actually the core of the whole series of reforms, was the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act of 1950. The Act provided for the abolition of absentee landlordism completely, under which surplus land from big landlords was acquired and redistributed among the tillers. A ceiling of 22.5 acres was imposed on land-ownership and surplus land was transferred to the tillers, without any compensation given to the earlier landlords. The main features of this legislation were:

- a) Fixation of a ceiling on the holding of proprietors at 22.75 acres (182 kanals) of land, excluding orchards, fuel and fodder reserves and uncultivable waste land;
- b) Transfer of surplus land to tillers cultivating the land without any payment;

- c) Fixation of a ceiling (at 160 kanals) on land including that which was owned and which had been leased out; and
- d) Surplus lands which were not in the cultivating possession of any person, were acquired by the state.

As a result of this enactment, 9000 odd proprietors were removed from 4.5 lakh acres of land out of which about 2.3 lakh acres were transferred to the tillers in ownership rights and the remaining land vested in the state. By 1961 about 8 lakh acres of land were transferred to tillers. Due to this land transfer, about 70900 landless peasants in the valley and 25000 lower-caste Hindus in Jammu region became land-proprietors.

For the further protection of the occupants, especially for preventing the fragmentation of land holdings, the Act forbade the transfer of land or any interest therein by a self-cultivating proprietor or a tiller without the permission of the government. In case the new tiller-proprietor did not himself cultivate his land or sublet his land for two successive harvests, his right of ownership would extinguish and his land would be taken over by the government.

Wazir Committee Recommendations

In order to review the working of Land Reforms in the state, the state government appointed a Committee under the chairmanship of Justice Wazir in 1952. The Commission in its report recommended that: a) the maximum unit for a proprietor in Kashmir should be fixed at roughly 28 acres and in Jammu at 34 acres against the prevailing unit of 22.75 acres; and b) secondly lands attached to Buddhist religious institutions in Ladakh called Gumpas, should be excluded from the operation of the Act. Subsequently a series of legislations was passed to remove the flaws present in the previous legislations in order to give more and more rights to the tenants, to impose restrictions and to make the resumption laws.

3.4.4 THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR AGRARIAN REFORMS ACT, 1972

The state Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms Act of 1972 inaugurated the fourth phase of the reforms. This was intended to further abolish “absentee landlordism” and to confirm the ownership of land among the tillers. The Act came into force in May 1975, with the following provisions:

1. Vesting of ownership rights of land (excluding orchards) held by owners and intermediaries who are not in its personal cultivation to those who held such land in personal cultivation on September 1, 1971.
2. Imposition of a ceiling of 100 standard Kanals (12.5 standard acres) and vesting of all land in excess of this ceiling with the state.
3. Payment in lieu of all land vested with 1 and 2 above at rates specified by the Government.
4. Provision for resumption of land by any intermediary or absentee landlord on certain specified conditions.
5. Full compensation for evacuee lands.
6. While there is no ceiling as such on orchards, an annual tax has been imposed on such portions of an orchard, which exceed 12.5 standard acres at the rate of Rs 800 per standard acre.
7. Standard acre has been defined with reference to various kinds of soil in irrigated and unirrigated areas.

In a nutshell, the 1972 reforms reduced the land ceiling from 22.5 acres to 12.5 acres and lots of land was further released and transferred to numerous tillers. Also, ceiling was fixed on family not on individuals as was the case in the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act 1950.

However, several objections were raised and some writs filed against this Act in the High Court of J&K. It was contended that under the Act, the ownership of the tiller would get confirmed only after twenty years during which period the tiller was bound to pay rent to the Government that would remit it to the original owner whose ownership rights were terminated under the Act. The Act was challenged also on the ground that its drafting was very loose as, for example, the word “personal cultivation” had given rise to ambiguity and confusion. Due to these contentions, this Act was later modified by the Agrarian Reforms Act, 1976 under which, subject to a ceiling of 12.5 Acres, the ownership rights in the land were given to the tillers who held it in personal cultivation and consequently, all rights of absentee landlords including intermediaries who were not cultivating the land personally in Kharif 1971 were extinguished. Excess land that was held by a tiller vested in the State that distributed the same among the landless according to the rules appended to the Act. The orchards were excluded from the operation of the Act.

3.4.5 LAND REFORMS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR: A CRITICAL REVIEW

According to George Mathew, land reform was a watershed in the history of Jammu and Kashmir and a measure, the first of its kind in the subcontinent, lauded by different sections of society and people belonging to different walks of life in the country. The land reform greatly helped the marginal sections, especially the Scheduled Caste to become landowners. During 1950s and 1970s, out of total surplus land taken away from the landlords, 70.24% was allotted to Scheduled Castes tenants. Hence, a radical inter-generational shift in the occupational pattern of the Scheduled Castes in terms of landless agricultural labourers to landowning peasants from grandfather to 47.1% in the present generation has taken place.

Hence, on the face of it, the land reforms in Jammu and Kashmir, much publicized in the press at the time and subsequently in literature, would look like a complete dissolution of the landed interests, the foundation of an egalitarian Kashmiri society, a happily-ever-after affair. But a deeper insight into working of the reforms and the very principles on which they were based reveals some innate flaws. As observed by Thorner, “in many areas the layer of absentee landlords at the top has been peeled off; at the bottom, in most areas forced labour has diminished or even vanished entirely. But, in between, the basic problems of the ordinary peasants persist. It has done the least for the petty tenants and landless labourers, these two categories being the largest in the countryside”.

Similarly, what Bardhan points out in the context of land reforms in the rest of India were equally applicable to Kashmir: “Laws were frequently enacted with deliberate loopholes and tell-tale exemptions designed to induce fictitious transfers of land to close and distant relatives and to keep the permissible retentions high”. For instance, orchards, fuel and fodder reserves were not directly included in the agricultural ceilings set by the 1950 Act. Therefore, some landowners converted their estates into orchards, thereby avoiding the ceilings. Bardhan argues that the land reforms were executed by a local bureaucracy largely indifferent, occasionally corrupt and biased in favour of the rural oligarchy. Riaz Punjabi substantiates these claims in Jammu and Kashmir with various examples of rent seeking activities in the countryside. Sarin argues that the revenue officials (Patwaris) enjoyed the greatest gains from land reforms, as they extracted large amounts of money from different parties. Political interference greatly undermined the

egalitarian aims of the reforms, as land was distributed and redistributed according to the political affiliations of the tenants. The cooperatives through which large sums of money were extended as 'unrecoverable loans' developed into a highly politicised sector of Kashmir economy. There was an alliance between the rich landlords and the bureaucracy, which worked against the interest of the poor peasants.

Similarly, Bhat points out that "the post reform period has given birth to a new class structure in rural Kashmir of commercially orientated landowners, land speculators, bureaucrats, houseboat owners, transporters and bootleggers wielding both money and political power". Ironically, the welfare policies aimed at the poorest and most backward sections of society, have been misallocated to further the interests of the very class whose rural monopoly they were intended to abolish. Giyas-u-Din argues that this process has led to the creation of neo-landlordism in the rural sector.

However, the above realities do not completely undermine the progress the land reforms achieved in Jammu and Kashmir. The land reforms changed the structure of the rural economy. The pattern of landholdings has been radically reversed over the past four decades from large average holdings, to smaller ones. In 1953, 42 per cent of holdings were below one hectare, constituting only 14 per cent of the total land. By 1986, 73 per cent of total holdings constituted 0-1 hectares, and their share of total area doubled to 32 per cent. Conversely, over the same period, large holdings of 4+ hectares, constituting 6 per cent of total holdings and 22 per cent of the total land, fell to 2 per cent of total holdings and 16 per cent of the total area. Although the increase in the number of small holdings has created a greater sense of equality and social justice, it has also resulted in a situation of extreme land fragmentation with average farm size now being considerably below the optimum size of farms for all India. The average holding in is extremely small, only 0.99 hectares compared to 1.82 hectares at the all India level.

3.4.6 LET US SUM-UP

The history of land reforms of J&K is old. It started with the appointment of two principal Settlement Officers of the State in 1887 and concluded with the passing of the Agrarian Reforms Act in 1976. However, substantial land reforms that intended to restructure agrarian relations and alleviate the tillers from their poverty and misery were initiated only under Sheikh Abdullah's

government after Kashmir's accession to India. That time political leadership used the process of land reforms as a part of its political agenda under the dominant influence of socialist Ideology on its minds. The radical attitude of the political leadership was the biggest factor that differentiated the agrarian reforms in Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of India. The *New Kashmir Manifesto* of 1944 was a part of this socialist agenda prepared by well known Communist leader BPL Bedi who was Sheikh Abdullah's mentor. Hence, among all the states in the Indian Union, Jammu and Kashmir has the unique distinction of having introduced land reforms of considerable magnitude, including the remission of land revenue on small holdings.

3.4.7 SOURCES

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3.4.9 EXERCISE

1. Write a note on historical background to land reforms in Jammu and Kashmir.
2. Outline agrarian reforms after 1948.
3. What are the major recommendations of Wazir Committee?
4. Write a note on the Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms Act.
5. Critically analyse politics of land reforms in Jammu and Kashmir.

4.1 AUTONOMY AND REGIONAL AUTONOMY: ASPIRATIONS AND POLITICS

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

4.1.0 Objectives

4.1.1 Introduction

4.1.2 Demand for Autonomy: Historical Context

4.1.3 Constitution of State Autonomy Committee (SAC)

4.1.3.1 SAC Recommendations

4.1.3.2 Basic Presumptions

4.1.3.3 Centre's Rejection

4.1.3.4 Indifference in Jammu and Ladakh

4.1.4 Regional Autonomy

4.1.4.1 Constitution of Regional Autonomy Committee (RAC)

4.1.4.2 The Major Recommendations of the RAC

4.1.4.3 Peoples Democratic Party's Self Rule

4.1.5 Autonomy, Regional Autonomy: Critical Assessment

4.1.6 Let Us Sum UP

4.1.7 Exercise

4.1.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson debates issues around State Autonomy and Regional Autonomy. After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- understand the historical context for the demand of autonomy;

- know the major recommendations of the State Autonomy Committee and reasons for Centres rejection;
- familiar with demands for regional autonomy, recommendations of the Regional Autonomy Committee and reasons for why these not attracted favourable response; and
- critically debate on issues state autonomy and regional autonomy in Jammu and Kashmir.

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

For more than three decades, the demand for Jammu and Kashmir's autonomy has been raised by several political parties. In the 1980s, the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-state relations was setup to go into the question. There have been many proposals for devolving more powers to the states. The successive Central governments have failed to fulfil the demand for a more federal structure; even the Sarkaria Commission report has been ignored.

The State of Jammu and Kashmir had a special status within the Indian Constitution, from its accession in 1947 to till August 05, 2019. As you have already studied in previous lessons, the State of Jammu and Kashmir possessed more state autonomy as compared to other States of Indian Union. Since the beginning of its relationship with the Indian Union, there has been a persistent demand for more autonomy by the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It is noteworthy that the State of Jammu and Kashmir has a unique identity owing to its composite culture and a distinct political and constitutional history. The preservation of its uniqueness has made the State of Jammu and Kashmir quite sensitive on the issue of autonomy. This is evident from the fact that it "is the only State in the Union of India which negotiated the terms of its membership with the Union." Unlike other Princely States, the State of Jammu and Kashmir did not waive the option of forming its own Constituent Assembly to draft its Constitution. Unlike other Princely States, Jammu and Kashmir refused to surrender all its residual autonomy to the Indian Union and expressed its inability to accept all the terms of the Constitution of India. This led to the inclusion of Article 370 in the Constitution of India to safeguard its internal autonomy.

4.1.2 DEMAND FOR AUTONOMY: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The demand for autonomy in Jammu and Kashmir followed by heated discourse on the subject has been appearing and fading intermittently. The demand as well as discourse has an historical

context. Despite the constitutional safeguard, there is a prevalent view that the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir has been eroded since 1953. The dismissal and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, the most potent advocate of the State's autonomy, is considered to be the beginning of the erosion of the State autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir. The different constitutional provisions, applicable to Jammu and Kashmir after 1953 are viewed as the erosion of the state autonomy. In addition to it, the governments which were installed in the State, from time to time, with the active connivance of the Government of India also undermined autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir. This has given rise to a sense of betrayal and alienation among the residents of Jammu and Kashmir, more so among Kashmiris. In other words, there has been strong resistance to the different constitutional provisions extended post-1953 by the Union of India to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The first voice of protest was raised by Mohammed Sheikh Abdullah in 1970s.

The basis for contemporary Autonomy demand has its basis when the same has been incorporated in Indira-Sheikh Accord which brought him to power in 1975. In practical terms, it is related to restructuring the constitutional relations between the State of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union of India. Sheikh Abdullah stated that he never challenged the accession of the state with the Union, but his 'quarrel with the Union of India related to the quantum of the autonomy of J&K state and not accession', recorded in his autobiography. Sheikh Abdullah had also further asserted that many laws which were extended to the state during his absence should be abrogated. This assertion gradually resulted in the demand of 'restoration of autonomy' on the part of his party, the National Conference (NC). After assuming the office of Chief Ministership in 1975, he appointed a committee to review the parliamentary laws extended to the State in the post-1953 period. The review concluded that all central laws and provisions of the Constitution of India extended to the State were properly applied. The following year another review gave opinion contrary to the former one. Neither of them was laid on the floor of the House. Sheikh Abdullah's demand for autonomy was based on pre-1953 status for the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Responding to this demand, Indira Gandhi asserted that the 'needless of [the] clock do not swing backwards', thereby indicating that the laws extended by the Union to the state could not be abrogated. Be that as it may, despite such demand on the part of the J&K leadership and this response from the leadership at the centre, there has been periodic emergence of the autonomy issue which has been primarily articulated by the National Conference in the state.

4.1.3 CONSTITUTION OF STATE AUTONOMY COMMITTEE (SAC)

The demand for autonomy became loud again in mid-1990s when Sheikh Abdullah's son Farooq Abdullah fought elections of 1996 on the main plank of autonomy. After its forced withdrawal from the political scene in the wake of militancy and mass upsurge in early 1990s, the National Conference used 'autonomy' as its main ideological plank to reclaim its political constituency in Kashmir. In its first central working committee meeting held in 1994, after a gap of five years, the party held the union of India responsible for destroying the original constitutional arrangement of the state and for alienating the people of Kashmir. It passed a resolution, which asserted that, 'the time has come when this state of affairs should be reviewed in order to restore autonomy to its pristine and original form'. Autonomy in its 'pristine form' was defined with reference to the constitutional status of the state in the pre-1953 period.

The party contested the 1996 assembly elections with the slogan of 'autonomy' and proclaimed its massive victory in this election as a mandate for restoration of the pre-1953 constitutional position of the state. Soon after forming the government, it constituted the State Autonomy Committee (SAC), headed by Karan Singh to "examine and recommend measures for the restoration of autonomy to the state of Jammu and Kashmir consistent with the Instrument of Accession, the Constitution Application Order, 1950, and the Delhi Agreement of 1952". Karan Singh resigned from the SAC in July 1997, and thereafter the SAC was headed by G. M. Shah, a State cabinet minister and a loyal confidant of Abdullah. The Report of the SAC made public in April 1999 was discussed in a special session of the state legislative assembly on June 26, 2000. The session concluded with the 'Autonomy Resolution' demanding that the union and the state government take positive and effective steps for implementing the report. The resolution triggered a controversy with many apprehensions expressed against its pre-1953 stance.

4.1.3.1 SAC Recommendations

The SAC report made the following major recommendations:

- i) The word 'Temporary' be deleted from the title of Part XXI of the Constitution of India and the word 'Temporary' occurring in the heading of Article 370 be substituted by the word 'Special'.

- ii) Matters in the Union list not connected with the three subjects of Defence, External Affairs and Communications or Ancillary thereto but made applicable should be excluded from their application to the State.
- iii) All modifications made in Article 246 in its application to the State subsequent to the 1950 order should be rescinded.
- iv) Articles 248, 249, 250, 251, 262 and 263 should be omitted from their application to the State.
- v) Article 254 should be restored to the position it had in its application to the State in 1954.
- vi) Regarding emergency provisions, the report stated that Articles 355, 356, 357, 358, 359 and 360 should be made non-applicable to the State as was the position in 1954.
- vii) The report recommended a separate Chapter on Fundamental Rights to be included in the State Constitution.
- viii) Articles 72 (1)(c), 72(3), 133, 134, 135, 136, 138, 145(1)(c) and 151(2) should be made non-applicable to the State as was the position in 1950 Order. Articles 149, 150 and 151 should apply to the State in the form in which they were in 1954.
- ix) Articles 218, 220, 222 and 226 should also be omitted in their application to Jammu and Kashmir State.
- x) With regard to financial matters, the report recommended that the matter be discussed between the State representatives and the Union Government as agreed to during the talks in 1952.

In Article 312 the brackets and words “including the State of Jammu and Kashmir” inserted by the Constitution (Application to Jammu & Kashmir) Order, 1958 be omitted.

- xii) The report also recommended omission of Articles 338, 339, 340, 341 and 342 and corresponding provisions should be made in the State Constitution. It also recommended clause (4) of Article 368 to be deleted.
- xiii) Regarding the Schedules, the report recommended that in the Seventh Schedule entries in the Union List not applied to the State by the Constitution (Application to Jammu &

Kashmir) Order, 1950 should be omitted. Concurrent List which was not applicable to the state in 1950 but was applied by subsequent orders should cease to apply to the state.

4.1.3.2 Basic Presumptions

Two basic presumptions underlie the State Autonomy Committee Report prepared in the late 1990s. These are:

- (a) Autonomy representing the aspiration of the people of Kashmir is a specific demand located in the history of the freedom movement of Kashmir. The federal context of India is basic to the issue of autonomy. The asymmetrical nature of the federal structure of India guaranteed a differential status to Jammu and Kashmir. The Constitution of India treats the state differently from other constituent units in the distribution of sovereign power.
- (b) The equation between Indian Union and Jammu and Kashmir is a negotiated settlement unlike other states in India where it is settled one. The State joined the Union on voluntary basis and negotiated the terms of its relationship. Whereas other princely states signed the Instrument of Accession to India and subsequently the instruments of merger, the accession of J and K was limited only to the areas of Defence, External Affairs and Communications. While other states gave up their right to their separate Constitution and “agreed to what the Constituent Assembly of India would give to them via the Constituent Assembly of the Union”, the government of this state did not accept the Constitution of India as an instrument for the governance of the state.

It is with reference to these presumptions that the Report privileged the pre-1953 constitutional relationship between the centre and the state. This period is defined both by the limited applicability of the Constitution of India as well as a continuous process of negotiation between the centre and the state. Three landmarks of the period that are highlighted in the report are Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order of 1950, and the Delhi Agreement of 1952.

The State Autonomy Report also recommended for withdrawal of the extension of the Fundamental Rights to the state; its substitution by a separate chapter on Fundamental Rights in the state constitution is suggested. A fresh discussion on the financial relationship between the

centre and the state, including the jurisdiction of the Comptroller and Auditor General is also called for. The Report also finds certain changes made in the constitution of the state – especially change of nomenclature of the head of the state and state Executive, mode of appointment of the head of the state¹ and administration of state judiciary – as contradictory to the original logic of autonomy and recommends their reversal.

4.1.3.3 Centre's Rejection

The union cabinet, in response to these apprehensions, summarily rejected the Report. While “Committed to the promotion of federal harmony by ensuring a partnership of the Centre and the States as laid down in the National Agenda for Governance of the National Democratic Alliance”, the Centre, however, rejected the Autonomy demand stating that “the Cabinet finds the resolution passed by the State Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir endorsing the report of the State Autonomy Committee unacceptable. The Cabinet feels that the acceptance of this resolution would set the clock back and reverse the natural process of harmonising the aspiration of the people of Jammu and Kashmir with the integrity of the nation”.

According to the Union Cabinet, most of the recommendations contained in the report of the State Autonomy Committee seek to reverse the application of constitutional provisions to the State of Jammu and Kashmir which may not only adversely affect the interests of the people of the State but would also tantamount to removal of some of the essential safeguards enshrined in our Constitution. Besides, the issue of restoring the constitutional situation in Jammu and Kashmir to its pre-1953 position had been discussed in detail by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1974-75. It is noteworthy that the agreement signed after these negotiations had affirmed that “provisions of the Constitution of India already applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir without adaptation or modification are unalterable”. The cabinet, therefore, decides not to accept the resolution passed by the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on the report of the State Autonomy Committee by stating that the “Government is of the firm conviction that national integration and devolution of powers to States must go together”.

4.1.3.4 Indifference in Jammu and Ladakh

The State Autonomy Committee report approved and passed by the State Legislature has not appealed or resonated with the people of Jammu and Ladakh regions. Both the regions expressed strong opposition to the the pre-1953 stance of the Report of the SAC. The strong wave of resentment against the Report has been a result of the Kashmir-centric approach of the Report that not only ignores the plural realities of the state but also undermines the regional aspirations. The Report not only locates the discourse of autonomy in the specific history of Kashmir but also projects the demand for the 'state autonomy' as an exclusive demand of the Valley

The most important reason for resistance to the Report of the SAC, within the regions of Jammu and Ladakh, relates to its failure to incorporate the logic of internal devolution of power. This is a serious flaw of the report because these regions suffer from an acute feeling of regional deprivation. Among the most common complaints voiced here are those related to disproportionate share of political power, developmental grants, bureaucratic positions and employment opportunities among the three regions of the state. Kashmir, it is felt, generally gets a bigger piece of cake, leaving the other two regions perpetually deprived. Since no mechanism of internal devolution of power is suggested in the Report, it is felt that the autonomy for the state may actually come to mean autonomy for Kashmir only. It may not flow to the regional and subregional levels. The state, in any case, is known for its centralised structure of power and despite persistent regional discontent, the successive state governments have resisted all demands for devolution of power.

During the 1996 assembly elections, almost all political parties operating in the regions of Jammu and Ladakh had been compelled to take cognisance of the demand for regional autonomy. The National Conference had also reaffirmed its commitment to grant autonomy to regions. After assuming power, it had appointed the Regional Autonomy Committee (RAC) to deliberate upon the question of internal devolution of power.

4.1.4 REGIONAL AUTONOMY

There have been several regional agitations in Jammu and Kashmir dating back to the early 1950s to voice the demand for regional autonomy. In 1952, a major agitation was launched by the Praja Parishad, an RSS-supported regional party in the Jammu region. The main demand of this agitation (with the slogan 'ek vidhan, ek pradhan, ek nishan' or 'one constitution, one

president and one symbol') was the complete constitutional integration of the State of Jammu and Kashmir with India. Jammu Autonomy Forum since mid-1960s has campaigned for regional autonomy under the leadership of Balraj Puri.

The J&K State People's Convention, convened by Sheikh Abdullah in 1968, representing the entire political spectrum of the valley, adopted an internal constitution of the state which provided for regional autonomy and further devolution of power to districts, blocks and panchayats. He convened a convention of leaders of Jammu and Ladakh in 1974 where the commitment to regional autonomy was reiterated.

To address the demand for regional autonomy, the State Government in the past set-up five Commissions. These are:

1. The Glancy Commission (1931)
2. The Gajendragadkar Commission (1967)
3. The Qadri Commission (1972)
4. The Sikri Commission (1976)
5. The Wazir Commission (1981)

While the Commissions appointed in 1972 and 1981 examined demand for carving more districts in Jammu, the other two commissions recommended measures which could rectify the regional imbalances and harmonise inter-regional relations. The Gajendragadkar Commission in its report recognised the widely held feeling of regional discrimination in the two regions of the State by stating: "In fact, we consider that the main cause of irritation and tension is the feeling of political neglect and discrimination, real or imaginary, from which certain regions of the State suffer".

Such sub-regional discontent grew as a result of the backwardness of the peripheral areas of the state. The Gajendragadkar Commission had noted that 'within both Jammu and Kashmir regions there are certain pockets which have remained much more backward than the rest of the region... these areas deserve special attention and the governments should address themselves urgently to the task of developing them speedily.' Despite this warning, little was done by successive governments to tackle the problems of the peripheral areas.

4.1.4.1 Constitution of Regional Autonomy Committee (RAC)

The demand for regional autonomy in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is the demand for internal devolution of power in the State and for equal political participation of different regions in the integrated development of the State. During the 1996 Assembly elections, the demand acquired such strong public support that all political parties across ideological lines were forced to incorporate it in their electoral manifestos. Finally when the National Conference came into power, it appointed Regional Autonomy Committee (RAC) on November 13, 1996 which submitted its report in April, 1999.

4.1.4.2 The Major Recommendations of the RAC

The Regional Autonomy Committee made twenty-four pages report which was endorsed by the State Cabinet in January, 2000. Following are the major recommendations of the report:

i) In view of historical, social, ethnic and development factors, the Committee recommended that the existing two Provinces/Divisions of Jammu and Kashmir should be classified into eight new regions/provinces as:

1. Kamraz (Baramulla and Kupwara Districts)
2. Nundabad (Budgam and Srinagar Districts)
3. Maraz (Anantnag and Pulwana Districts)
4. Chenab Valley (Doda District and Tehsil Mahore)
5. Jammu (Jammu, Kathua and Udhampur)
6. Pir Panchal (Poonch and Rajouri Districts)
7. Ladakh (Leh District)
8. Kargil (Kargil District)

ii) The Committee recommended to establish Regional/Provincial Councils in the State to meet the requirement of devolution of power to different regions as per the Committee's classification. The Regional/Provincial Councils should be elected in the same manner in which the State legislature is elected. There should be reservation of 25% seats for women in the Council. The

leader of the majority party so elected in the Region/Province shall head the Regional/Provincial Council and be designated as Chief Executive Councilor. The financial powers of the Councils would be limited to the subjects allocated to the Council.

iii) The committee recommended that the government may consider setting up District Councils as an alternative to the Regional/Provincial Councils. The District Councils may be established in the existing districts of the entire Jammu and Kashmir State.

The committee recommended that government may constitute an Expert Committee and seek its opinion on the proposed models before taking a final decision in this behalf.

v) The committee recommended constituting a Finance Commission for the Jammu and Kashmir State to recommend the methods and mechanisms of raising and dividing funds to different organs.

vi) The Committee recommended necessary changes in the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir in order to implement the recommendations made in the report.

The Report of the RAC, that was made public simultaneously with the Report of the SAC, has not succeeded in removing the grievances of people of Jammu and Ladakh regions. Rather than going into the question of autonomy at the regional levels, it has recommended an altogether new classification of regions. In accordance with this classification, Jammu gets divided into three regions and Ladakh into two regions as you can see above. The suggested division, more or less, is communal in nature. In Ladakh, for instance, the division takes place between the Buddhists of Leh and the Muslims of Kargil. In Jammu, similarly, the Hindu dominated districts are separated from the Muslim dominated area of Doda and Poonch-Rajouri. In fact, a part of the Muslim-dominated area (Mahore Tehsil) is carved out of the rest of the Hindu dominated districts to fit in the Muslim-dominated area of Doda.

An acute sense of discontent in the areas of Doda, Poonch and Rajouri led to a process of politicisation and assertion of competitive identities. Although much of the discontent arose from a resentment against the Kashmir elite for monopolising power and neglecting development of the backward areas, there was also resentment against the Jammu elite for not highlighting the backwardness of the region.

Viewed from this perspective of sub-regional discontent, the autonomy discourse acquires a different flavour. Neither the discourse of state autonomy nor that of regional autonomy are sufficiently comprehensive to deal with questions of sub-regional deprivations. What is required is a multi-layered structure of autonomy that must flow from the state to the region and from the region to the sub-regional and finally to the panchayat level. Conscious of the complexity of the underlying problems of discontent at regional and sub-regional levels, Balraj Puri, in his alternate report on regional autonomy, had recommended a five tier system that included devolution of power from state to region to district, block and panchayat level. The political, legislative, executive and financial powers and functions of each tier, he felt, should be carefully spelt out and constitutionally guaranteed.

Such sensitivity to the complex realities of the state, particularly at the regional and the sub-regional levels, was unfortunately missing in the official Regional Autonomy Committee report. Instead of acknowledging the multi-layered political aspirations within the state and underlining the need to extend the logic of political autonomy from the state to regional and sub-regional levels, it merely foregrounded sub-regional aspirations and totally ignored the question of Jammu's regional discontent.

Arguing that the recognition of 'culturally, linguistically, ethnically and geographically' heterogeneous Jammu as a region hampered the process of social and human development of ethnic groups and democratic participation at the grassroots level within the state, it suggested recognising Poonch-Rajouri and Doda as autonomous regions. Such a process of identifying new regions, in its opinion, was the only way to deal with the 'perception of neglect and injustice, real and imaginary, existing among groups in the diverse regions of the state.'

The demand for regional autonomy and further devolution of power at district, block and panchayat levels, on the pattern of panchayati raj in the rest of the country, would not only address the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Ladakh, but would also safeguard the unique identity and civilisation of the Kashmir valley. The world over, in democracies, the centralised polity is being substituted by federal and decentralised structures, which go a long way in empowering people at the grassroot level. This is all the more necessary in the most diverse state of India. Regional autonomy alone can harmonise its diversities and satisfy the basic human urges of empowerment and identity.

4.1.4.3 Peoples Democratic Party's Self Rule

The Peoples Democratic Party has offered a working paper on Jammu and Kashmir known as self rule booklet to resolve the issue of autonomy in States. It defines self rule as “a trans-border concept that has a pan-Kashmir dimension but at that same time seeks to regionalize power across Jammu and Kashmir.” The Self-rule has three key elements - a new political superstructure known as the Regional Councils of Greater Jammu and Kashmir that has representatives from Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) , the economic integration across the line of control that includes establishment of common economic space, instituting a dual currency system and adequate constitutional safeguards which include repealing of Article 356, Article 249, the sixth amendment of Constitution of the State, Article 312 and the proviso added to the Article 368. You must have already become familiar with the details on PDP's Home Rule as it has been dealt at length in the lesson on Political Parties.

4.1.5 AUTONOMY, REGIONAL AUTONOMY: CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

The issue of autonomy in the state is complex in nature. It not only involves the question of evolving the fair principles of centre-state relations but also the questions of internal devolution of power and inter-regional relations. The two issues of the state autonomy and the regional autonomy are, in fact, logically interconnected. It is not possible to achieve the one without aiming at the other. The politics of autonomy, of the regional or of the state level, somehow has failed to carry this logic forward. Those who demand regional autonomy oppose the demand of autonomy for the state and those who demand state's autonomy hesitate to talk about the regional autonomy.

Given the peculiar historical context of the state, its plurality and diversity as well as its divergent political aspirations, the state needs a multi-layered package of autonomy that extends beyond the state to the regional and sub-regional levels. The sub-regional discontent in the state is as acute as the regional discontent. The backward and peripheral parts, both in the Jammu and Kashmir regions, often complain of political and economic neglect. Regional autonomy, therefore, has to flow further to the sub-regional and the panchayat levels.

The sense of discrimination and grievances felt in the Jammu region has not a new one. Acknowledging the regional irritations and tensions, the Gajendragadkar Commission of Enquiry

appointed by the government in the mid-60s to comprehend the causes of inter-regional tensions and irritations had observed that Jammu nurses a strong feeling of discrimination. According to the commission, this was due to the absence of a feeling of equal participation in the integrated development of the state.

There is a persist feeling that decision-making in the state is regulated by 'pro-Kashmir' preferences which, in turn, arouses strong public emotions. In the last five decades there were many occasions when such emotional public response took the form of major or minor agitations. Underlying these was the perception that Kashmir got a larger share of the cake in the distribution of resources or development funds; that the genuine demands of Jammu were unjustly dealt with. Some long-pending demands, like carving out more districts in the region (or legislative constituencies), were deliberately undermined in order to maintain the dominance of the Kashmir region.

Such feelings of deprivation and discontent had their roots in the existing asymmetrical power relations between Jammu and Kashmir. The politics in the state was so structured that Kashmir occupied a large political space, keeping Jammu virtually deprived of political power. Giving primacy to the political deprivation of Jammu over economic and developmental deprivation, the Gajendragadkar Commission had suggested remedial measures to reduce tensions arising out of a disproportionate distribution of power between the two regions. It had recommended that 'a convention should be established that if the chief minister belongs to one region, there should be a deputy chief minister belonging to the other region. By another convention, the number of cabinet ministers belonging to the two regions should be equal.'

The political reality of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is marked by heterogeneity and divergent political aspirations. It calls for a politics that not merely recognises the plurality of the state but also devises suitable political mechanisms for handling such plurality. Yet, instead of sensitivity to the complexity and plurality, the present political scenario of the state reflects a tendency to seek simplistic solutions through the means of divisive politics.

4.1.6 LET US SUM UP

When the State of Jammu and Kashmir was joined with the Indian Union, the relationship of special status was institutionalised in terms of Article 370, which provided more autonomy to the

State compared to other states of Indian Union. Owing to the special circumstances in which the former princely State was able to negotiate its accession to India, severe limitations were placed by the Constitution itself on the Centre's powers vis-a-vis Jammu & Kashmir. However, over the years, a series of measures and practices beginning with the 1954 Constitution Order undermined the rights and vital powers devolved by Article 370 on the State. The SAC Report and the resolution adopted by the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly represent a flamboyant attempt to reverse this situation, by pressing the exaggerated demand that the State be returned to its pre-1953 constitutional status. The demand for Autonomy can justly be criticised for its opportunism, but there is absolutely nothing secessionist or extremist about it. No reasonable person can go along with the SAC's recommendation that all areas of constitutional authority other than Defence, External Affairs and Communications should be restored to Jammu & Kashmir. Nor can it be held that autonomy as demanded by the National Conference is the natural antidote to extremist, secessionist and terrorist activities in the State. Realistically speaking, the demand has been advanced by National Conference more of as a political strategy to satisfy its political constituency rather than actually expecting positive response from the Union government.

Very few outside Kashmir subscribe to the scope of autonomy as defined in the resolution adopted by the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly which is going back to the pre-1953 status. Over the decades, the developments in the political system and the political-administrative structure in the country have warranted certain changes which are justified. It is not possible to accept the definition of autonomy which assigns the Centre only external affairs, defence and communications.

4.1.7 EXERCISE

1. Explain the reason for the emergence of demands for autonomy.
2. Write a note on State Autonomy Committee and its recommendations.
3. Why many criticised the Regional Autonomy Committee Report?
4. Autonomy for Kashmir always must accompany regional autonomy for Jammu and Ladakh. Elaborate

4.2 SEPARATIST POLITICS: ORGANISATION, LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

4.2.0 Objectives

4.2.1 Introduction

4.2.2 Reasons for Emergence of Separatism

4.2.2.1 Partition of Indian Subcontinent

4.2.2.2 India's Fears about Centrifugal Tendencies

4.2.2.3 Weak Democratic Institutions

4.2.2.4 Islamization of Society

4.2.2.5 Destabilization of Elected Governments

4.2.3 Separatist Organizations and Strategies

4.2.3.1 The Plebiscite Front

4.2.3.2 Jamaat-i-Islami Jammu and Kashmir

4.2.3.3 The JKLF

4.2.3.4 Militant, Terrorist and Jihadi Organizations

4.2.3.5 The All Party Hurriyat Conference

4.2.4 Relevance of Separatists

4.2.5 Let Us Sum UP

4.2.6 Exercise

4.2.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson focuses on explaining the separatism in Kashmir Valley, reasons for its emergence, changing contours of separatist politics, organizations involved in it. After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- understand the reasons for emergence of separatism;
- comprehend the politics of separatism before 1990;
- familiar with changing contours of separatism in post-1990 with rise of militancy; and
- the role of Hurriyat in the separatism movement of Kashmir valley.

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Separatism in Kashmir is the most contentious issue not only in India but also in international politics. It is contentious because the understanding and opinion varies drastically in matters like separatism. The Faultline divided between ideological and political orientation, the religious and ethnic identities, universal and parochial, centripetal and centrifugal etc. operate in politics of separatism. Hence, acceptability to one particular standpoint is a difficult scenario. The play of deep divisions and contentions can be witnessed from the fact that none of the separatist movements achieved its goals without bloodshed and violence. This is not only a situation in Jammu and Kashmir but across the countries and continents.

Many a times, separatism and secessionism are easily confused because, according to dictionary definitions both refer to a severance of ties or termination of contractual relations between territories and populations. However, there is a significant difference between these two. Separatism is the more general, encompassing term, covering all instances of political difference or alienation that features a demand for reduction of control by a central authority and delegation of more power to the region concerned. Separatism may be expressed in demands for states' rights or increased local autonomy in certain spheres of decision-making. Secessionism is a narrower, more specific term referring to a demand for formal withdrawal from a central political authority by a member unit on the basis of a claim to independent, sovereign status. Secessionism leads to dismemberment and disintegration of the state while separatist demands not necessarily involve disintegration.

India is hardly a stranger to separatist movements—no country in the world has experienced as many separatist movements as India has. These separatist movements had emerged in all parts of India – South (Dravidian movement), East (Northeast) and North (Punjab and Kashmir). Separatist conflicts in India, hence, are a function of the country’s extreme size and ethnic diversity, on the one hand, and the state’s long-running stand that it would not compromise on national security and would not tolerate any movements that weaken its national cohesion.

In this lesson, we would briefly study the separatism in Jammu and Kashmir, the reasons for the emergence of separatist movement, various organisations involved in the movement and the strategies they deployed as part of their separatist agenda.

4.2.2 REASONS FOR EMERGENCE OF SEPARATISM

Many scholars and academicians trace separatism in Kashmir to the post-1989 political movement and violence that completely halted the democratic politics in the state. However, the roots of separatism can be traced much before to the politics of ‘Plebiscite Front’ immediately after the arrest of the Sheikh Abdullah in early 1950s. A comparative analysis of separatist movement thus requires, first, an understanding of the preconditions which give rise to separatist politics. Hence the discussion on separatism must start with the colonial division of subcontinent on religious lines, the post-independence Indian government’s desperation to not allow further division of the country, politicization of Kashmir issue in western-power dominated United Nations, extremism in India’s domestic politics, short-sighted policies pursued by Union government in Jammu and Kashmir, etc.

4.2.2.1 Partition of Indian Subcontinent

Contestation over Kashmir and its future began during the drive for, and in the immediate aftermath of, independence from the British. Under the terms of the British withdrawal, the Indian subcontinent was divided on religious lines separating its Muslim-majority provinces into a separate state, Pakistan. The grey area in between was occupied by the so-called princely states, which were governed by monarchs nominally independent of the British crown but who still paid allegiance to it. The leaders of these princely states were given three choices: join

India, join Pakistan, or become independent. Though Maharaja Hari Singh opted for India, after entertaining the inclination of independence to his princely state for some time, the newly emerged Pakistan was never able to accept the reality and still continues to demand and make efforts to wrest Kashmir from India. This has created considerable friction not only between the two neighbours but also among the people of Jammu and Kashmir, as some section of the people, how small the segment may be, who were wooed by the Pakistan propaganda. The intractability of Indian and Pakistani positions stemmed not so much from the strategic location of Kashmir as from the significance of the dispute for nation-building. Indian decision-makers tend to see Kashmir through the prism of secular nationalism as the basis for nation-building. If Kashmir were allowed to secede because of its Muslim-majority population, Indian leaders doubted that the idea and practice of secularism could survive, indeed, that India could survive. Conversely, Pakistan tended to see Kashmiri accession as integral to its Islamic identity. If a Muslim-majority area contiguous to Pakistan remained in India, the original justification for a Muslim state would be difficult to sustain. Thus, while multiple wars have added layers of political and emotional commitment to the Kashmir dispute, at base what is involved is a difference over the constitutive principles of nation-building and, by extension, of regional order.

4.2.2.2 India's Fears about Centrifugal Tendencies

As above paragraph would tell you, the Government of India was always sensitive to the separatist movements and more often than not over-reacted to separatist politics because of the chequered history of partition and violence it caused to the people. Moreover, the plurality in India and cohabitation of multiple religious, linguistic, ethnic and regional groups in all the regions made it more sensitive to any kind of divisive politics. India fights separatists because it fears that concessions would only encourage other groups to stake similar claims. The thinking goes that, in a state as heterogeneous as India, such a policy would lead to a domino-effect, and the internal destruction of the state. Its urgency to keep territory within the Indian Union is also a function of external factors: the interplay of its rough neighbourhood, its ambitious regional and global agenda, and its collective view of the causes of its colonial subjugation. However, this overriding consideration of political elite for India's internal and external security also has its own pitfalls leading some times to insensitivity towards the political sentiments of the

regional or subnational elites, which may lead to separatist movements as it happened in Kashmir or Punjab.

4.2.2.3 Weak Democratic Institutions

One of the greatest achievements of India is the institutionalization of democratic practices with the first stroke of independence. This was the first and unprecedented process in the history of democracy. The Western democracy has travelled almost 500 years to evolve the way it is now. However, India's Constitution makers has gifted to young independent India a living Constitution, democratic institutions, independent Election Commission, universal adult franchise, separation of powers between legislature, executive and judiciary, division of subjects between Union and States, etc. However, none of these democratic structures and processes and practices were institutionalized in case of Jammu and Kashmir due to the prevalent special circumstances. From Jawaharlal Nehru's and Indira Gandhi's perspective, the sensitive border state simply was not ready for democracy. Building Indian nationalism and expanding democracy simultaneously were sometimes considered incompatible goals, and it appears as if this reasoning was applied to Jammu and Kashmir in particular. An autonomous political opposition was regarded as a hindrance to national integration.

Hence, initially, immediately after the accession of the State with the Indian Union, the Centre allowed the political power to be concentrated with the leading political figure of the time, Sheikh Abdallah. It set a wrong precedent in the institutionalization of democratic process with uncontested electoral outcomes and concentration of power in a single party, the National Conference and a single hand. After the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, the pendulum of democracy swung to other extreme by means of exporting unrepresentative and non-responsive governments from the Centre to the State. The poor record of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir is characterized by constant election rigging and central government intervention, which prevented the development of fair and autonomous competition among political parties. The over intrusion of the Centre and imposition of illegitimate governments on people of Jammu and Kashmir led to many political distortions, one of which was growth of sectarian, extremist and separatist politics.

4.2.2.4 Islamization of Society

Till the beginning of the twentieth century, the Muslims of Kashmir had not developed an Islamic identity in modern religious terms. The bases of self-identification were multiple, and for most of the people, the village or tribe – the notion of *zatorkram*, evoking the concept of birth into a common clan group – still remained as an important identity marker. However, Kashmir witnessed a deliberate process of redefining religion and re-conception of Muslim identity in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This redefinition was based on the notion of a ‘pure Islam’ as against what was projected as a ‘degenerated version’ of saint or sufi-worshipping. This process was reinforced by the institutionalization of the position of Mirwaiz, which led to the deepening of Muslim consciousness and defining community in religious terms. The increasing Islamization of Kashmiri society gradually impinged upon the liberal and secular ethos of Kashmiri politics.

From the middle of 1970s Islamization got accelerated due to three developments: a more Islamized Pakistan under General Zia-ul-Haq intervening in the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir; the Iranian revolution spawning religious fervour in Kashmir; and the Afghan civil war generating an infrastructure of Islamic terror in neighbouring regions. Internal discontent in the Valley, especially among the youth, provided a favourable atmosphere for the external forces to operate there. Such discontent, arising in the economic and social developments of the time, was aggravated due to the disillusionment with the political process in the State.

The emergence of Jamaat-i-Islami significantly contributed to the Islamization of Kashmiri society. Over the years since 1972, the Islamic fundamentalists carried on ceaseless and vociferous campaign for the Islamization of Kashmir. Their ideological influence had been greater than their actual support among the people. Though fundamentalism and separatism complement each other, however, it is through secessionism that Jamaat not only forges links with broad masses but helps them in their mass mobilization. The political spread of Jamaat further increased after the Iranian revolution 1979.

4.2.2.5 Destabilization of Elected Governments: Collapse of Democratic Politics

The democratic vacuum that has been discussed above rectified, to a greater extent, by the two important political developments in the 1970s: a) the Indira-Sheikh Accord b) the Centre’s

efforts to strengthen the democratic process in the State during the Janata Party regime. The first one, that is the Indira-Sheikh Accord brought the popular leader in Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah into power, while the second one enabled the conduct of fair and transparent elections to state legislature during the 1977 Assembly elections.

However, despite Sheikh Abdullah's return to politics in 1975 and the first uncontested election in Jammu and Kashmir in 1977, the early 1980s saw a growing turbulence in the politics of the state. After Sheikh's death in 1983, leadership passed to his son, Farooq Abdullah. The central government, determined to increase its influence, particularly after the death of Indira Gandhi in 1984, steadily undermined Farooq's leadership. His government was dismissed in 1984 and central rule imposed. An earlier generation of Kashmiris might grudgingly have accepted this dismissal of elected government. The new generation, better educated and more conscious of its political rights, proved more aggressive, demanding and low tolerant.

Besides this, an unholy alliance was formed between the Congress and National Conference during 1987 Assembly elections to the State. Realizing the consequences of standing against the over-demanding Centre, Farooq Abdullah agreed for an electoral alliance with the Congress. Many people in Jammu and Kashmir, especially in the Kashmir Valley, could not accept this alliance as they perceived it as a sell-out to the centre.

It was an unpopular alliance, imposed not only on NC but also on people of Kashmir. In the vacuum arising out of the loss of NC's autonomous political space, the Islamic forces coalesced around a loose alliance, the Muslim United Front (MUF). The Jamaat was a key component of this alliance, though around twelve smaller Islamic parties also joined it. With these Islamic parties assuming some legitimacy in politics, the stage was set for centrality of issues based on religion. The MUF described politics as an inseparable part of religion, saw shrines as effective power centres and declared the 1987 Assembly election as a contest between 'Islam and Secularism'.

Notwithstanding this limitation of MUF, the coalition of religion-based political groups was able to make a mark in the electoral politics of the Valley, capturing as many as one third of the total votes polled during the 1987 Assembly elections. However, it could not win many seats, leading not only to allegations of wide-spread rigging but also to the eventual collapse of democratic politics. As the leaders of the MUF and other oppositional parties refused to accept

the electoral verdict, the newly elected NC government faced a severe crisis of legitimacy which was intensified due to popular response against the State as well as the Central government. Pakistan, meanwhile, used this situation to involve itself directly in the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir. All this led to a phase of ‘militancy’ in the State when many who had earlier been part of the electoral process, as candidates or as supporters of MUF, crossed the border – to be trained for armed conflict against the Indian State.

Since then the space for separatist politics increased in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the Kashmir Valley. These separatist politics have not exhibited one uniform pattern but multiple complex patterns, hence multiple organizations emerged representing these complex patterns – the indigenous organizations, Pakistan-sponsored groups, transnational groups, underground or over ground organizations, etc.

4.2.3 SEPARATIST ORGANIZATIONS & STRATEGIES

Separatism in the Kashmir Valley reflected through and represented by many organizations. As the objectives and goals of these organizations differ considerably, the politics and strategies designed to pursue these politics also differ substantially. In this section, we try to understand some of the separatist organizations in the Kashmir Valley and the strategies they pursued to attain their goals, starting with the Plebiscite Front.

4.2.3.1 The Plebiscite Front

Following the overthrow of Sheikh Abdullah, his lieutenant Mirza Afzal Beg formed the Plebiscite Front on 9 August 1955 to fight for the plebiscite demand and the unconditional release of Sheikh Abdullah who had been arrested after his removal. It reflected the continuity of the Kashmiri politics that had evolved in 1930s and 1940s. Very soon the ‘plebiscite’ demand was taken to the level of rural masses and a political psyche of contestation and resistance was generated.

The whole idea behind the demand for plebiscite was to contest the finality of Accession of the state with India and to demand that the matter be placed before people of the state both as per the commitment of Government of India as well as per the UN resolutions. Disengagement of Kashmiris from the governing dispensation and their emotional involvement with Sheikh

Abdullah had the effect of attributing 'legitimacy' to the Plebiscite Front's politics, characterised by contestation of India's position vis-à-vis Kashmir and interrogation of intrusive politics of the Central government.

By 1972, the Front had emphasized that any plebiscite was not intended to contest Kashmir's accession to India. Plebiscite Front leader Afzal Beg stated that while a plebiscite would put Kashmir's accession into India on "a lasting foundation", his party was no longer insisting on holding a plebiscite. The Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi welcomed the Front's willingness to confirm Indian sovereignty and held talks with Sheikh Abdullah. The 1974 Indira-Sheikh accord confirmed the support of Sheikh Abdullah and the Plebiscite Front for Indian sovereignty over Kashmir and ended the demand for a plebiscite in return for extensive autonomy and self-government under Article 370 of the Constitution of India. Following the agreement with the Union government, Sheikh Abdullah merged the Plebiscite Front into a renewed National Conference in 1975, which won the democratic elections and affirmed Abdullah as the new Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

4.2.3.2 Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir

Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir is a socio-political and religious organisation that was founded in 1945 as a chapter of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind during the Independence movement. Jamaat-e-Islami was separated from its parent organisation in 1953 over differences in political ideology. The party, with pro-Pakistan leaning during the Plebiscite Front days and also during the eruption of militancy, pitches itself as socio-religious organisation working mainly in the field of education and awareness about Islam.

Having an essentially lower middle-class base of traders, students and lower level government employees, the Jamaat was successful in mobilising people who were frustrated with the politics of secular groups such as NC and Congress. With Sheikh Abdullah in detention, the NC led by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad had lost its popular character, and the habits of power had shredded whatever democratic content it had earlier. To quell the consequent discontent, the ruling elite promoted all kinds of political and religious forces, generating a political space congenial for Jamaat-i-Islami to extend its political constituency, and to start building its cadres in villages and towns through Madrasas. Later, in the seventies, it could also gather some

political clout due to its collaboration with the Congress in the State. With a view of distracting Kashmiris from the influence of Sheikh Abdullah and the Plebiscite Front, Syed Mir Qasim, the then Chief Minister, had facilitated the entry of the Jamaat into the electoral politics of the State in early seventies. Although its electoral role was of not much consequence, it could use the electoral space for mobilizing the disgruntled people of Kashmir. By summer 1980, it had been successful in giving rise to a youth movement. Young people, especially students, were attracted to the Jamaat-i-Tulba, its student organization, which advocated an Islamic order in the State. These youth wings and the organizations associated with it (like Jamaat-i-Tulba during the seventies and eighties, and Hizbul Mujahideen more recently) specifically believe in militancy and many a time instigate violence.

The Jamaat's continuous engagement with and its focus on institution building and welfare activities increased its legitimacy in Kashmiri society. This, however, was not the sole reason for the increase in the popularity of parties like the Jamaat. Delhi's continuous interference in the politics of J&K, the diluting of the State's constitutional status, and undermining the political agency of Kashmiris, contributed to an increase in the Jamaat's membership. The decay of secular institutions led people to "transcendentalism"; the failure of secular democracy in Kashmir led people to the "Political Islam" of the Jamaat.

Amid the brutal militancy and counter-insurgency operations, in 1990, the Jagmohan administration imposed ban on the Jamaat, which continued till 1995. The Jamaat has become founding member of the All Party Hurriyat Conference when it was established in 1993. However, it severed its ties with the same in 2003 when Syed Ali Shah Geelani, the most influential leader of the Jamaat walked out of Hurriyat over alleged proxy participation in 2002 Assembly polls by some leaders of the People's Conference led by Sajad Gani Lone.

The Jamaat is the main Pro-Pakistan organization among the all the parties functioning in Kashmir. It has supported the mass agitations in Kashmir ever since they have erupted in 2008. It has supported the post-Burhan Wani agitations in Kashmir that erupted in 2016. Knowing the potentiality of the Jamaat, the Union government banned the Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir on March 2, 2019 for a period of five years citing reasons that the outfit was in "close touch" with militant outfits. The Jamaat-e-Islami was banned under anti-terror laws of the Centre, aiming at preventing any "escalation of secessionist movement" in the state.

4.2.3.3 The JKLF

The JKLF was the brainchild of the Kashmiri militant leaders, Amanullah Khan and Maqbool Bhat, who formed the group in the early 1960s—then known as the Jammu and Kashmir National Liberation Front—in Muzaffarabad, Pakistan. Immediately after the formation of JKLF, Bhat returned to the Valley to train Kashmiri youth. He was subsequently arrested on charges of sabotage and murder in crimes that allegedly took place in 1966, and he defended his actions stating, “I could not reconcile to the new political set-up brought about in Kashmir after Sheikh Abdullah’s dismissal and arrest in 1953.” He was sentenced to death in 1980, and executed four years later.

In the Seventies and early Eighties, the JKLF operated mostly from London and PoK, with Amanullah Khan and Hashim Qureshi directing from London unit and Farooq Haider and Mohammed Muzzafar holding forth in POK. Their activities were, in large measure, confined to propagating the cause of a plebiscite in J&K and mobilising international support for this objective. In the middle of 1980s, Amanullah Khan reached Pakistan and assumed leadership of the JKLF. Reportedly, he had established contacts with Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) for building a network of training camps in Pakistan, encouraging youth from J&K to cross the Line of Control (LoC) and receive training.

All through its history the JKLF has demanded for conducting a plebiscite in J&K, but has made no effort to conceal its preference for an independent, sovereign State. This latter position is in direct conflict with Pakistan's contention, that Kashmir in its entirety belongs to it, made apparent by a consistent refusal for a third option in the plebiscite that has been demanded (the other options are: accession to either India or Pakistan). Another cause of friction between the JKLF and its mentors is the status of Gilghit-Baltistan. While JKLF maintains that this region is a part of J&K, Pakistan holds that this region is separate from the State and its accession to Pakistan is final and irrevocable. These differences never faded but came to the fore at various points of time. As a result, Pakistan was, on occasion, hostile towards the JKLF. For instance, when Maqbool Butt escaped from an Indian jail in 1968 and crossed over to Pakistan, he was jailed for a few months.

After the 1987 elections, the JKLF spearheaded the militant movement for the complete independence of Jammu and Kashmir from both Pakistan and India. It relied mostly on the

diaspora activists in Muzaffarabad and London, and the Kashmiris crossing over for training. Yasin Malik, who acted as a booth agent for MUF candidate, too, crossed over to Pakistan, and in 1989, he returned to the valley as a militant commander of the JKLF.

Analysts hold that, despite the differences over the opinions and strategies about the future course of Jammu and Kashmir, the ISI had to depend upon the JKLF in the initial stages of the insurgency as it lacked its own network in J&K. Once the JKLF began bringing in people for training, the ISI gradually weaned away a considerable section of them from the JKLF. Using money and weapon supplies as baits, the ISI bought the loyalty of several militants. By 1991, with ISI's help the pro-Pakistan Hizb-ul-Mujahideen gained greater terror potential as compared to the JKLF. Moreover, the formation of Harkat-ul-Ansar, Lashkar-e-Toiba and numerous other smaller outfits contributed to the marginalisation of JKLF. Besides this, JKLF has been directly targeted by the ISI and the outfits that were controlled by it with armed attacks.

Due to these activities of ISI and Pakistan sponsored militant groups, Yasin Malik severed his ties with JKLF led by POK based Amanullah Khan, and started his own JKLF in the Valley. In May 1994, Yasin Malik who was released from jail (after his arrest in August 1990) declared that his faction would renounce violence as a tool to achieve the goal of 'independence' and carry out the struggle for self-determination of Jammu and Kashmir following the Gandhian principles of non-violence and Satyagraha. The JKLF has become a constituent of the All Party Hurriyat Conference when it was formed by various groups, carrying its protests against Indian state.

4.2.3.4 Militant, Terrorist and Jihadi Organizations

There are many Pakistan-sponsored terrorist organizations that are actively working in Jammu and Kashmir carrying out violent armed attacks against Indian security forces and civilians. Many of these organizations are functioning under a pan-Islamic ideology. Many assert that these groups represent a far-right political version of the Sunni Islamic faith that has been nurtured widely in South Asia only since the Zia ul-Haq regime (1977-1988) in Pakistan. Although there is little agreement from one faction to another, many of these groups reject the central tenets of democracy and seek to set up a theocracy which would stretch throughout South Asia. Many have argued that these militants see the “jihad” (struggle) for Kashmir as a

first step to liberating the entire South Asian Islamic population from the secular dominance of India. Barring that, however, they would prefer that the entirety of Kashmir become part of Pakistan and are violently opposed to Kashmir becoming independent. Some of the active groups in the present times are explained below.

Hizb-ul Mujahideen

The largest group operating in Kashmir, Hizb-ul Mujahideen, was founded as the militant wing of the Kashmiri political separatist group Jamaat-e-Islami (Kashmir). The group's current leader, Syed Salaudin (formerly Mohamed Yusef Shah), began the militant struggle after losing the election of 1987. The functioning of the Hizb considerably differs from that of JKLF though larger junk of both cadres are from Kashmir. The Hizb, like the Jama'at, sought to create an independent Islamic state. In fact, most of the Jama'at members have publicly associated themselves with the Hizb, strengthening the organisation and structure of the militant group. The JKLF, on the other hand, was inclined towards establishing a state on the principles of a secular democracy. As a result, Kashmir witnessed clashes between the JKLF and the Hizb, leading to the killings of scores of supporters on both sides. But given the social and organisational acceptance that the Hizb enjoyed in Kashmir—owed, in large part, to the ostensible support of the Jama'at—the JKLF could not keep up the fight.

Lashkar-e-Taiba

Lashkar-e-Taiba was founded in 1993 in Pakistan as the militant wing of the Markaz Dawa Al Irshad (the Centre for Preaching). Lashkar's leader, Hafiz Mohammed Saeed founded the group in 1987. The Markaz sprawls across 190 acres in Muridke (approximately 28 miles from Lahore) in Pakistani Punjab. Pakistan's ISI began to support Ahle Hadith, Deobandi and Wahabi Islamic groups including Lashkar-e-Taiba as intermediaries in Kashmir after 1993. Many security experts in India and abroad have argued that Lashkar's actions after September 11 show that the group has moved beyond Pakistani control. After it was alleged that the group was responsible for the attacks on the Indian Parliament in December 2001, Lashkar-e-Taiba was banned by Pakistan and placed on the U.S. Department of State's list of organizations that sponsor terror. While some Pakistani press reports have stated that the group has been dissolved,

others say the ban has not been kept in good faith because Lashkar has simply changed its name, to Jamaat al-Dawa, and continued its activity.

Lashkar-e-Taiba has been accused by India of attacking military and civilian targets in India, most notably the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, the 2008 Mumbai attacks and the 2019 Pulwama attack on Armed Forces. Its stated objective is to introduce an extremist Islamic state in South Asia and to terrorize the people residing in Kashmir. The organization is banned as a terrorist organization by India, the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Russia, Australia, and the United Nations. Though formally banned by Pakistan, its ISI, continues to give LeT help and protection.

Jaish-e-Mohammad

Since its inception in January 2000, Jaish-e-Mohammad has rapidly emerged into prominence in the Kashmir Valley. The group was founded by the militant Islamic cleric Maulana Masood Azhar after his release by the Indian government in exchange for 155 hostages taken in the hijacking of an Indian Airlines passenger plane in 1999. Jaish-e-Mohammad was placed on the U.S. State Department's list of organizations that sponsor terrorism after the group was charged with the December 2001 attack on the Parliament building in Delhi. According to B. Raman, Jaish-e-Mohammed is viewed as the "deadliest" and "the principal Islamic Jihadis organisation in Jammu and Kashmir". The group was responsible for several terror attacks: 2001 attack on Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly building in Srinagar, which killed 38 people, 2001 Indian Parliament attack, 2016 Pathankot airbase attack, 2016 attack on the Indian Mission in Mazar-i-Sharif, 2016 Uri attack and 2019 Pulwama attack in which 40 Indian security persons dead. The group has been designated as a terrorist organisation by Russia, Australia, Canada, India, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the United Nations.

4.2.3.5 The All Party Hurriyat Conference

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was formed on July 31, 1993, as a political platform of the separatist movement. It was an extension of the conglomerate of parties that had come together to contest Assembly polls against a National Conference-Congress alliance in 1987 — an election that was widely alleged to have been rigged. The conglomerate of disparate

ideologies was held together by their common position that Jammu & Kashmir was “under occupation of India”, and the collective demand that “the wishes and aspirations of the people of the state should be ascertained for a final resolution of the dispute”.

At a time when militancy was at its peak, this conglomerate represented the political face of the militant movement, and claimed to “represent the wishes and aspirations of the people”. It had brought together two separate, but strong ideologies: those who sought J&K’s independence from both India and Pakistan, and those who wanted J&K to become part of Pakistan. Most of the groups that were part of the Hurriyat had their militant wings, or were linked to a militant outfit.

The APHC executive council had seven members from seven executive parties: Syed Ali Shah Geelani of Jamat-e-Islami, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq of Awami Action Committee, Sheikh Abdul Aziz of People’s League, Moulvi Abbas Ansari of Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen, Prof Abdul Gani Bhat of Muslim Conference, Yasin Malik of JKLF, and Abdul Gani Lone of People’s Conference. Of these leaders, Sheikh Aziz was killed in police firing near Sheri in Baramulla in August 2008. Abdul Gani Lone was killed by militants in May 2002.

The Hurriyat also had a 21-member working committee. This included the seven members of the executive council, plus two members from each of the seven parties. There was also a general council, with more than 23 members, including traders’ bodies, employee unions, and social organisations. The membership of the executive council couldn’t be increased as per the APHC constitution, but the general council could accommodate more members. The Hurriyat had observer status at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The Hurriyat Constitution

The APHC constitution, describes it as a union of political, social and religious parties of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, set up to:

- Wage a peaceful struggle to secure for the people of Jammu and Kashmir in accordance with the UN charter and the resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council, the exercise of the right to self-determination, which shall include the right to independence.
- Make endeavours for an alternative negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute amongst all the three parties to the dispute — India, Pakistan and people of the Jammu and

Kashmir — under the auspices of the UN or any other friendly country, provided that such settlement reflects the will of the people.

- Project the ongoing struggle in the state before nations and governments of the world in its proper perspective, as being a “struggle directed against the forcible and fraudulent occupation of the state by India”.

Split in the Hurriyat

Because the Hurriyat was such a mixed bag of ideologies and personalities, infighting was a near permanent feature. Disagreements often came out in the open. In September 2003, the Hurriyat split on the questions of its future strategies, the role of militancy in the separatist movement, and dialogue. The Syed Ali Shah Geelani-led group was firm that talks with New Delhi could take place only after the central government accepted that J&K was in dispute, while the group led by Mirwaiz wanted talks. Geelani hasn't departed from his stance that “the struggle will continue till complete freedom” or a “referendum in accordance with UN resolutions”. The Mirwaiz group backed former Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's four-point formula that envisaged suzerainty and a joint mechanism between the two parts of J&K, without changing any existing boundaries. The Mirwaiz group also entered into a dialogue directly with New Delhi during Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's tenure, and held talks with the then Deputy PM, L K Advani, in 2004.

The leaders of the Mirwaiz faction, along with Yasin Malik (who was no longer a part of Hurriyat by then), visited Pakistan through the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road in June 2005 to hold talks with various Muzaffarabad-based Kashmiri separatist leaders and the Pakistani establishment. This visit was facilitated by the Vajpayee government, which had come up with Srinagar-Delhi, Delhi-Islamabad and Srinagar-Islamabad tracks as part of its Kashmir peace process.

Though there were stark ideological differences within the two factions of the Hurriyat, the trigger for the split came on the question of fielding proxy candidates by a Hurriyat constituent, People's Conference, in the 2002 Assembly polls. Geelani vehemently criticised the decision, and sought the eviction of the party led by Abdul Gani Lone's sons, Bilal Lone and Sajjad Lone. Geelani also left the Jamaat-e-Islami, and formed his own party, the Tehreek-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, in August 2004. The Mirwaiz's faction split in 2014, when four of

its leaders — Democratic Freedom Party president Shabir Ahmad Shah, National Front chairman Nayeem Ahmad Khan, Mahaz-e-Azadi chief Mohammad Azam Inqlabi and Islamic Political Party chief Mohammad Yousuf Naqash — left.

4.2.4 RELEVANCE OF SEPARATISTS

The separatist leadership across the ideological divide represents a major political constituency in J&K, which will likely remain relevant, as long as the issue is not resolved. The separatists are relevant because of a sentiment, which is not voted on in any election. The other reason why they remain relevant is because of their utility to the state at times of crises. When Kashmir was up in arms during the public agitations from 2008-10, New Delhi sent high-level delegations to speak to the separatists in a bid to calm tempers.

However, J&K's separatist leaders are under pressure to keep their political relevance intact in the aftermath of the outbreak of violence beginning July 2016. Despite their personal and ideological differences, three top separatist leaders—Yasin Malik, Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq—established the Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL) in late-2016 to streamline street protests and galvanise a united front regarding developments in the so-called 'self-determination' movement.

The JRL regularly issues 'protest calendars' and calls for bandhs (shutdown) or election boycotts in pursuit of their goals. However, this is partly fuelled by challenges in light of the emerging new militancy. In the last two years, religion has been given significant relevance over politics as far as the local militancy is concerned. The local militants have started criticising or intimidating the separatist leaders for their 'limited' participation in the Azadi movement. Thus, while some analysts are of the opinion that the erosion of the Hurriyat's relevance in the Valley is somewhat over-exaggerated, however, instances such as masked youth raising pro-Islamic State (IS) slogans from Mirwaiz's pulpit, the killing of a separatist leader in South Kashmir by 'unknown' assailants, and not allowing separatist leaders at militant funerals suggest a growing anger against the Hurriyat leadership. In a rare incident, former Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) commander Zakir Musa even threatened graphic physical harm to Hurriyat leaders, including Geelani, if they continued to call their struggle a "political and not Islamic one." Further, with the

emergence of IS and al Qaeda modules in Kashmir, some new-age militants are calling for the creation of an Islamic 'Caliphate' over a democratic state.

The Hurriyat faction is currently unable to translate motivation into action due to Geelani's deteriorating health, and other separatist leaders failing to muster enough public support. This precarious position is a result of not just the post-2016 situation in the Valley, but also factors that existed pre-2016 that have compounded pressure on the separatist leadership. These include New Delhi's attempts to either completely side-line or limit the leadership's role in the Kashmir issue; raids conducted by the National Investigative Agency (NIA) on middle-rung separatist leaders. The NIA has charged some separatist leaders for fomenting street violence in the Valley. These arrests came at a time when the Hurriyat leadership was already facing troubles in controlling the street agitations that began after Wani's killing.

In terms of territory, the Hurriyat's influence has further degraded in South Kashmir in the past two and a half years. Their hold or relevance remains restricted to the traditional pockets of North and Central Kashmir. Since July 2016, there is a growing impression that the Hurriyat is no longer central to the separatist movement in Kashmir. With the emergence of social media platforms that offer easy access to propaganda literature, the region has become more malleable to religious radicalisation. Given the current situation in Kashmir, the separatist leadership is likely to lose more credibility in the near future. More importantly, as the 'new-age' militancy gains more ground, separatist leaders face a realistic fear of losing their influence or being marginalised.

4.2.5 THE CENTRE'S COUNTER-SEPARATISM STRATEGY

In recent times, the Government of India increased its counter terrorism activities to eliminate terrorism cut all sources of support to terrorist and separatist activities. India has made abundantly clear to its neighbours that it will no longer remain a silent witness to terror attacks on it and would take resolute steps. India has tried to escalate the dangers of terrorism at international level and also included it as part of the agenda of "neighbourhood first policy" engagement. Centre has adopted a four-pronged strategy to tackle militancy, separatists and usher in development and good governance in J&K. The multi-pronged strategy includes going tough against militants, discrediting separatists and ushering in a new era of development. The

newspaper reports mention that as many as 31 properties worth over crore belonging to separatist leaders of Jammu and Kashmir have been “identified” for attachment as proceeds of crime by enforcement agencies. The National Investigative Agency (NIA) that started probing terror financing in 2017 charged as many as 12 people under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. The Government of India has been trying to choke funds reaching terror groups. Earlier, it cracked down the under-invoicing of goods passing through the border trading points between Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Jammu and Kashmir. The Centre also banned organisations like the Jamaat-e-Islamai (J&K) and Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF).

4.2.6 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson, we have studied separatism in Kashmir. It has emerged in a particular context that has both internal and external dimensions. Many organizations are involved in carrying forward separatist politics in the Kashmir Valley, starting with Plebiscite Front, Jamaat-i-Islami MUF, JKLF, and various militant organizations and finally the Hurriyat Conference. The very presence of this many organizations inform us that separatist movement is not a cohesive unit. The relative strength of these organizations is also changing over the period depending on the context. Hurriyat which was a solid organization at one time is now reduced to multiple splinter groups. Similarly, there is no similarity between the strategies adopted by one organization to the other. The counter terrorism strategies pursued by the Government of India, and the emergence new age militant groups with more focus on religion in Jammu and Kashmir also undermined the relevance of Hurriyat in present day political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

4.2.7 EXERCISE

1. Briefly state the reasons for emergence of separatism in Kashmir Valley.
2. Explain separatism in pre-1990 period and what are the major organization that championed the separatist movement during that period.
3. Write a note on Hurriyat Conference.
4. Critically analyse the relevance of Separatists in contemporary scenario.

4.3 DISPLACEMENT: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

4.3.0 Objectives

4.3.1 Introduction

4.3.2 Historical Background

4.3.3 Internal Displacement in Jammu and Kashmir

4.3.4 Categories of Displacement

4.3.4.1 Border and Displacement

4.3.4.2 Kargil War and Displacement

4.3.4.3 Ceasefire and Displacement

4.3.4.4 Development and Displacement

4.3.5 Impact of Internal Displacement

4.3.6 Role of Government

4.3.6.1 Allotment of Land to the Displace People

4.3.6.2 Cash Loans

4.3.7 Socio-economic Profile of POK Refugees

4.3.8 Let Us Sum UP

4.3.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson explains the issues related to displacement in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- understand the historical context for the displacement;
- various categories of internal displacement;
- Role of Government in addressing problems of displacement.

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Displacement is defined as the uprooting of a person or a group of persons from the place of their habitual residence. It can take place because of the natural or the man-made reasons. While sometimes conflict, violence or persecution is responsible, sometimes it is the natural disaster or the quest for development which forces people to move out.

Displacement is one of the severe realities of the continuing J&K conflict. It remained to be a continuous feature of the state right from the time of partition. Large-scale displacement from different parts of state is a significant feature of Jammu and Kashmir. An estimated one million people have been displaced in the state due to militancy. Over 700,000 people in Jammu & Kashmir, mostly the inhabitants of the Kashmir valley and border areas of Pakistan, are directly affected by the instability in the region. In the present chapter we will discuss various issues associated with displacement, and its effects on the life of people in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The chapter will broaden the debate on the present issue from the period of partition to the contemporary time, with different displacement issues in the state. Internal and external displacement is discussed in this chapter like refugees of partition, development displacement of Ranjit Sagar Dam and the night displacement of border issues. The present chapter will discuss the political social and economic and psychological effect on the life of state's people, and how the displacement hampers the normal life of the people.

4.3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The partition of India in 1947 is remembered for many reasons and one such is the largest internal flow of people that followed. An estimated six to seven million Muslims moved from India to Pakistan and nearly eight million Hindus and Sikhs moved from Pakistan to India. The areas on the border that were ravaged by Pakistan's aggression in 1947 included Mirpur, Poonch, Muzaffrabad and frontier districts of Ladakh and Gilgit. Those refugees who were displaced from Mirpur, Poonch, and Muzaffrabad are now called as Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) refugees. The number of people directly affected and uprooted during partition were 12, 00,000. Out of total 12, 00,000 PoK migrants population in India, at least 40 percent of them have been leading a miserable life for the past three generations in Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri, Poonch and Udhampur districts of Jammu and Kashmir. This displacement not only involves the human

rights abuses, maltreatment and denial of livelihood of those who are being displaced but raise questions of identity, power and other related concerns. An estimated two lakh PoK migrants are residing under sub-human conditions in 34 camps in Jammu province, especially in R.S Pura and Jammu areas. They require immediate protection as well as permanent solution in India. The partition destroyed not only the life and property of lakhs of people but also the very fabric of human society and relationships.

The turmoil of 1947 resulted in large scale migration of people of all communities on either sides of the border. The people were forced to migrate with bitter memories of betrayal and sufferings in PoK and had to start lives in new surroundings. They had few choices and were prepared to do or accept anything to make a living. The people migrating from PoK had to seek relief in new surroundings which has not only brought changes in their places of residence but in their overall attitudes, habits and outlook of the people.

4.3.3 INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

India's largest site of internal displacement stems from the conflict in the Northwestern state of Jammu and Kashmir between militants seeking either independence or accession to Pakistan, and Indian security forces and police. The status of Kashmir has been in challenge since the creation of independent India and Pakistan in 1947, and the two countries have twice gone to war over the issue. Although security has improved with the ceasefire concluded in November 2003, Islamic militant groups have continued to launch attacks against local authorities and civilians to sabotage the peace process. Since 1989, the insurgency in Indian-administered Kashmir has claimed at least 67,000 lives.

More than 90 per cent of the Hindu population in the Kashmir Valley, the Kashmiri Pandits remain internally displaced as a result of this armed conflict. The government estimates that 250,000 fled from the Valley during the 1990s, while Pandit groups believe at least 350,000 people were displaced. Today, around 100,000 live in the capital New Delhi and some 240,000 in the city of Jammu. The government provision for 'migrant relief' consists of housing in one or two-room tenements, monthly food rations and cash assistance. By 1997, most had moved into their own homes in Jammu or elsewhere in India. Those that remain are predominantly rural folk uprooted from their farms and orchards in the valley, lacking the resources of more fortunate

brethren. They live in over-crowded and squalid conditions, which they term shame accommodation. Surveys indicate that they suffer a host of physical and mental health problems, economic hardship, and are dogged by fears of cultural extinction. The return to the Kashmir valley of some Pandits has become a possibility after the announcement in 2008 of a government package for their return and rehabilitation. The package provides for housing, employment and business opportunities, student scholarships and financial assistance.

Thousands of people were uprooted from their homes along the Akhnoor frontier in Jammu and Kashmir during the conflict and they continue to suffer. According to estimates, over 50,000 people along with their livestock migrated from the forward tehsils of this border area. The migrants are still holed up in tents along the Jammu-Poonch National Highway and left to care for them. Several times they tried to return to their villages but could not, due to the frequent outbreak of tensions. In 2001, many of them came home but had to leave again after India-Pakistan tensions increased after the December 13, 2001, attack on the Parliament of India.

People living in villages in other places along the border returned after the war, but the Akhnoor migrants could not. For, most of their homes had been destroyed in the shelling and their fields rendered infertile due to the increased toxicity in the soil. Elections in Jammu and Kashmir in November 2002 led to the creation of a new coalition government and raised expectations for an end to the displacement of the Kashmiri Pandits.

However, an ambitious return plan including cash assistance, interest-free loans and the building of 500 apartments in the Anantnag district where some of the displaced Pandits would be able to stay until they repair their own houses, has still not been implemented. Protection of the remaining Pandit population has been far from adequate, leading to further displacement during 2004 when 160 of the estimated 700 Pandit families remaining in the Kashmir Valley fled when an upsurge of violence and killings was noticed.

Minister for Housing and Urban Development said that as per the reports filed by the screening committee constituted by Deputy Commissioner Doda, Udhampur, Rajouri and Poonch, 4017 families comprising 20,931 souls were displaced from the militancy affected areas during the past ten years and the cases of 1717 families of these districts are under investigation.

During the Kargil conflict nearly 1.57 lakh people were displaced from the border belt. Now, all of them have returned to their respective places except 1302 families of Niabat Khour

in Akhnoor. Of the total, 1.07 lakh were migrated from Jammu, 17,692 from Kathua, 10,327 from Rajouri and 21,952 from Poonch. Besides this, in Kupwara district 16 families consisting of 97 souls were displaced.

Despite threats from some groups against any attempt to return the Kashmiri Pandits, the state government of Jammu and Kashmir for its part maintains that it is moving forward with return plans and that 1,600 families have signaled in writing that they want to return to the valley. Another long-lasting situation of internal displacement exists along the Line of Control separating Indian- and Pakistani controlled Kashmir. Since the end of the 1990s, clashes between Indian and Pakistani forces and attacks by separatist militant groups have led to several waves of displacement from villages along the Line of Control. Although, the ceasefire has substantially improved the security situation, more than 12,000 (some say 30,000) people, are still displaced on the Indian side because their villages have not been rehabilitated or their fields are mined. Administrative delays have also hindered their return.

4.3.4 CATEGORIES OF THE DISPLACEMENT

Apart from the above discussed causes, various other reasons of internal displacement were present in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The process of development has also displaced people from one region to another. But the serious fallout of the development process is its impact on the socio-economic life of people in view of displacement. The government as well as the non-governmental agencies including the academics reflects the views of the people. In the partition-related displacement in the state nearly 15,000 people fled from the adjoining areas of Pakistan. This can be termed as first kind of displacement. The second type of displacement was from Pakistan controlled Kashmir. There was huge influx of Hindus and Sikhs from the areas of Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Bagh, Rawalakot, Bhimber, Kotli and Jhanger. In an interview to the authors, Hardit Singh Panchi, President of the Jammu Kashmir Sharnarhi (refugee) Action Committee (JKSAC) informed that around 50,000 families have been displaced at that time. The 1965 war also led to a large-scale displacement of the people from Chhamb-Jurian area in Jammu. The 1971 war led to another type of displacement from Chhamb area. Around 4,900 families were displaced from ten villages. The Kargil war in 1999 also resulted in the displacement of a considerable number of people from border areas all over the state. Many of

them returned as soon as the crisis was over. But more than 60,000 people from Akhnoor continued to live in the camps till recent times.

India and Pakistan came to the brink of war on many occasions. This led to large-scale displacement in the state, especially from the border areas. For instance, the war scare of December 2001 after the attack on Indian Parliament led to massive displacement from the border. Another war scare due to May 14, 2002 fidayeen attack in J&K also led to displacement. According to an estimate, since 1999 Kargil war to 2002 war scare, around two lakh people in the state were forced to leave their native places from borders – 22,000 from Poonch, 9,000 from Rajouri, about 1.25 lakh from Jammu and 25,000 from Kathua district.

4.3.4.1 Border and Displacement

The nature of displacement from border may be classified as temporary, semi-permanent and permanent. The Chhamb-displaced, for instance, have permanently moved out of their native place since 1971. Temporary displacement takes place whenever there is disturbance on the border. Such temporary displacement is a recurring phenomenon in the state and people living on the border undergo dislocation multiple times, sometimes for few days and sometimes for months. Displacement, thus, becomes a part of their life wherein they keep shuttling between their native places and the camps frequently. Many of the border people have decamped nearly six times since independence i.e. in 1947, 65, 71, 87, 99 and 2001. This kind of displacement becomes semi-permanent when those who leave their native places in the wake of disturbed condition are not able to return even after years.

4.3.4.2 Kargil war and Displacement

The India-Pakistan war in 1999 resulted in the displacement of large number of people from all over the border including Kargil, Leh, Jammu and Kathua. The approximate numbers of persons displaced in Kargil, Leh and Jammu were 24,630; 3,245 and 1,00,000, respectively. Most of the displaced persons returned to their homes as soon as the tension eased out. About 60,000 persons of 11,044 families from more than 20 border villages from Akhnoor, especially Khour block, were not able to return. The reason being continued tension on the Akhnoor border, where international border meets LoC.

4.3.4.3 Ceasefire and the displacement

In the wake of the ceasefire between India and Pakistan in November 2004, the semi-permanently displaced felt the atmosphere conducive for return. The idea was, however, not devoid of problems and hurdles. After living as displaced for six years the life has changed so much that the return did not come as an immediate decision. The camp life was never a good option for them but the return too was not easy. Amidst this confusion many returned but many continued to live in the camps.

As per the information gathered during the survey, approximately 48,000 people have returned to their respective places but around 12,000 are still living in the three camps. These people are residing in the Devipur, Naiwala and Rampur colony camps. While the once largest camp, Devipur, at the time of survey in April was accommodating around 100 families, in Naiwala camp at least 400 families are still languishing. From among the 950 families living in the Rampur colony camp not even a single family had returned. In this camp people from three villages namely Chapriyal, Kachriyal and Samoo are living since June 1999.

4.3.4.4 Development and the Displacement

The development of large number of projects in the State of Jammu and Kashmir has also resulted in the displacement of people from their ancestral home. No doubt, the infrastructure projects have helped in increasing the productivity and production to a great extent, this march towards development is not unmixed blessings. They have given rise to involuntary displacement thereby creating untold miseries for the displaced. The state of Jammu and Kashmir has been experiencing this type of displacement because of the completed and many ongoing projects.

Jammu and Kashmir State is one of the potential regions for generation of power through hydroelectric rotor; important river basins of State having large potential of power generations of power include Indus and its tributaries, Jhelum and its tributaries, Chenab and its tributaries. Hydroelectric Power Projects, though they involve long gestation period are still considered to be the reliable and cheap option as the potential energy of water is tapped for generation of power. Hydroelectric power projects are Eco-friendly and except for maintenance they do not required any fuel for generation of energy.

Despite about 15,000 MW of the Hydro Electric Power potential of the State, 181 MW in the State Sector and 690 MW in Central Sector have been harnessed so far. These hydroelectric projects play an important role for the development of State but on the other hand they have displaced large number of family which has severe consequences on the social, psychological, and economic well being of the people. The Baglihar Dam which is one of the largest, with a capacity of 900 MW, was started in 1992. The construction of Baglihar Dam has forced large number of families out of their natural habitations. It has affected more than 30 villages partially or fully in Jammu and Kashmir State.

The construction of number of multipurpose projects to provide irrigation and to generate hydro-electricity has had a direct affect on the people inhabiting these areas. The people and the villages or hamlets have been uprooted from their hearth and home and probably fields as well. This requires the evacuation and rehabilitation policy for the people living in these submerged areas or villages. Development projects that displace people have generally given rise to social, economic and ecological and environmental problems. With the absence of the Rehabilitation and Resettlement policy the displaced family faced large number of problems in particular women and infant children. They have lived under depressing conditions throughout their life.

4.3.5 IMPACT OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Internal Displacement of PoK refugees has multi-faceted impacts. Partition and displacement not only affected the geography and history of these displaced persons but also the citizens of PoK who were living together in their earlier settings. Refugees from PoK have still not forgotten the trauma of displacement. Most of them lost their near and dears on their way to migrant camps. People saw their close ones dying of hunger, thirst and diseases. Unfavorable weather conditions also posed problems taking toll of lives. While interviewing some old aged respondents, they started shedding tears when they regretted upon their failure to leave their family members or relatives due to fear of losing their own lives. PoK 'refugees' after going through the trauma of displacement and subsequent hurdles in rehabilitation have established themselves in the camps. The impact of displacement on PoK refugees is analyzed as:-

1. Ever increasing forced migration in J&K: The turmoil of 1947 resulted in large scale migration of POK refugees. The number of people who migrated during the holocaust was

12,00,000. Officially 15,800 refugees were accounted for as refugees, while many others living close to the affected areas shifted to safe regions among their friends and relatives. Approximately 2, 000, 00 refugees from the total population are settled in 34 camps in Jammu province, especially in RS Pura and Jammu areas. Most of them were compelled to quit their native soil in Muzaffarabad, Mirpur and Poonch first in 1947 and then again in two phases in 1965 and 1971 after India-Pakistan wars.

2. Migration to New Settings: PoK refugees belong to two types of categories, urban and rural. The former were mostly engaged in petty trades and professions joined or started it again in new settings after a gap of few months. But rural population had no option and had to seek admissions to relief camps set up by the govt. They mostly lived in Nagrota and Yol camp in distress on govt. grants until they were allotted lands in different areas.

3. Change in Socio-Economic status: The shifted also changed their occupation from the earlier ones to variety of other occupations. The PoK 'refugees' who migrated from urban areas joined or started their earlier trades and professions. But those from rural areas firstly dependent on govt. grants but later on started agricultural activities on allotted lands. In some cases the land allotted was either far away or uncultivable.

4. Impact on in their Culture and Tradition: Displacement of POK refugees not only shifted their residence and occupation but also degenerated their cultural values and traditions. For instance marriages, festivals and other occasions which used to be a village affair also become a short term and formal affair.

5. Impact on Education level: Displacement affected the education of displaced people. The refugees from urban settings being educated members of upper castes are often better than their native homes. Many of them are in govt. jobs. But those from rural villages had to leave their schools in between. In the new settings they opted for lower jobs or daily wage jobs for economic reasons.

6. Decline in Self-Esteem: Due to displacement those who were well off in their native places left their immovable and moveable property and fled with very few resources.

7. Change in family structure: Family structure in these camps too is shifting from joint families in native places to nuclear in new settings.

Demands of PoK Refugees:

Main demands projected by the PoK refugees include:

1. Implementation of Wadhwa Committee report, no restriction on state subject for PoK refugees settled outside the State.
2. Ownership of right over evacuated land.
3. Claim over property left behind.
4. Relief at par with Kashmiri Pandits.
5. Reservation in professional colleges and scholarships for their students.
6. One time settlement package of Rs 16 lakh per family for the refugees of 1947.
7. Eight Assembly seats for PoK refugees here out of 24 reserved for PoK in Legislative Assembly, reservation for refugees in the Upper House,
8. PoK 'Refugee's' Development Board should be constituted with all financial powers and liberal aid for their upliftment and betterment.
9. Job reservation for refugee youth in State/Central Administrative services.
10. Improvement in civic amenities in the basties where PoK refugees are putting up,
11. Bringing back the money of refugees which was left in Mirpur branch of J&K Bank in 1947 at the time of migration.
12. Inclusion of refugees in the dialogue on J&K at every level.
13. The Central Act of 1954 (Displaced Persons Compensation and Rehabilitation Act), should also be applied in the case of PoK 'refugees'.

4.3.6 ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

The partition of the subcontinent at the very dawn of independence of India was a defining moment for the future direction and psyche of the new nation. The vicious communal violence and refugee crisis, which ensued, resulted in wide scale destruction of life, property and traumatized millions of people. The refugee had to start a new life as part of the newly independent state of India, and the government had to respond to an extraordinary situation at a

time when it hardly had any resources and experience in dealing with humanitarian emergencies involving such large number of people (Mahiga,2003:11). The government accordingly constituted the Central Refugee Committee vide Council Order No. J/13/47 on November 19, 1947 (Report of Wazir Committee, 1953). The refugee relief camps were opened at Palanwala and Jourian to accommodate them in government and private buildings. Thereafter, the Relief and Rehabilitation Department was established on April 14, 1948, under the Ministry of Health and Rehabilitation.

This department took charge of refugee camps in Jammu province and immediately reorganized the refugee camps officers. For the displaced persons from Tehsil of Haveli, Mendhar, Bagh, Sandhuti, who were collected in Poonch town ration valuing Rs 318,741 was arranged and dropped from air at Poonch town through Army Dakotas for free distribution among displaced persons. The Government of India set their Relief Organisation in Jammu at June 1, 1948. It established refugee relief camps at Nagrota, Chathe and Company Bagh. In addition to that a Home for the unattached women and children at Frashkhana at Jammu city was of state were admitted into the refugee camps at Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur. About 3000 displaced persons originally admitted in Jalandar camp was transferred to Hoshiarpur relief camp and then to Nagrota camp in June 1950 (Report of Wazir Committee 1953:63). At one time the strength of the Nagrota camp rose to 35,000 constituting 8,870 families. The camp was managed entirely by the government of India and by the end of 1949, an approximate amount of Rs 2 crore and 60 lakhs had been spent on it. During their stay at Nagrota camp, displaced persons were provided with tents for shelter. Free ration and cash dole. The scale of cash dole for those above six was Rs 4. Besides their free ration comprised atta, rice, sugar and pulses. These relief camps were closed were closed in 1951 when the refugee relief camps were opened at Yol near Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh.

There was another category of refugees who stayed outside the camps either by staying in rented accommodation or by staying with their relatives. For such persons the government had sanctioned Rs 6 as daily cash dole for those up to six months of age and Rs 12 for those above it, without any cereal ration. In Jammu city and other town's widows, orphans and invalid refugees were exempted from payment of rent for evacuee houses occupied by them. The total amount spent by both the state and the central government on the rehabilitation of refugees came to Rs 7

crores. It included Rs 2 crores and 60 lakhs on displaced persons at Nagrota camp, Rs 2 crores on Yol camp refugee and Rs 1 crore through the Joint Rehabilitation Board.

4.3.6.1 Allotment of Land to the Displaced People

Immediately on the dispersal of the displaced persons from the relief camps, a unit of land measuring acres of irrigated or 12 acres of non-irrigated was allotted to some of the displaced families by the Joint Rehabilitation Board. But soon after it was felt by the government that it might not be possible for them to provide land to each family at such a higher scale. Accordingly, vide Cabinet Order no. 578-C of 1954, which contains rules for allotment of agricultural land, fresh scale of land for allotment was prescribed which ranged from 2 acres irrigated or 3 acres non-irrigated or 6 acres non-irrigated depending upon the strength of displaced family. Besides land, cash loans were granted by the government to the displaced persons for the construction of houses and purchase of other necessary equipments.

4.3.6.2 Cash loans

These loans were recoverable after two years with simple interest at 4.5% in ten equal installments, commencing from the date of their grant. However, the recovery of these loans could not be made within the period stipulated in the agreements owing to weak economic condition of these refugees. Out of 40 respondents only 35 respondents availed loan given by the government whereas 5 respondents did not avail cash loan. Moreover, those who availed cash loan were of the view that this loan was not sufficient for the purpose it was given.

On analyzing the data collected from the field as well as secondary sources, it can be said that PoK 'refugees' have been victim of forced displacement which was ensued soon after partition. As revealed from the data these refugee had to go through lot of miseries and sufferings on their way to relief camps. The role of govt. both at State and Centre level was rated satisfactory by only 10% of the respondents and 90% expressed dissatisfaction over government's role.

4.3.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF POK REFUGEES

After going through trauma of displacement and subsequent hurdles in rehabilitation, most of PoK refugees have been fully established in the camps. The present socio-economic conditions of these PoK refugees can be analyzed as:

- 1. Age-wise distribution of respondents:** Out of total 40 respondents 30 i.e. 75% falls in the age group of 66-70 and above.
- 2. Present occupation of the heads of the household:** Out of 40 respondents 20 i.e. 50% falls in the age group of 71-80 and above do not take any occupation. Two are engaged in agriculture while 12 of them are engaged as self employed in occupations like transporter ship, shop keeping, driving, etc. out of rest only 6 have taken some private job.
- 3. Educational level of family members on the basis of sex above 14 years:** The data reveals that females are more literate than males in terms of their concentration in higher educational institutions.
- 4. Size of the household:** It has been analyzed that maximum respondents i.e. 30 have medium size of the household 5-8 members, 6 have large family size having 9 members and above and only 4 respondents have small size family up to 4 members.
- 5. Main source of income:** Source of income varied for different respondents. But the results revealed that 18 generate income through self employment. 10 households have income through private jobs and 10 have government services. Only 2 households depend upon agriculture.
- 6. Monthly income of the household:** Monthly income level of majority of the households i.e. 30 is above 10000 rupees per month. The 6 have income between Rs 8000-1000 per month and only 4 have income below 8000 rupees a month.
- 7. Status of the house:** After 64 years of displacement almost all have succeeded in rebuilding their houses. Out of 40 respondents 36 have their own houses where as only 4 are living in rented houses.

8. Type of family: After these people settled in these camps they have joint families. But now most of the respondents have nuclear type of family. Out of 40 respondents only 15 have joint family structure and 25 are living in nuclear families.

4.3.8 LET US SUM UP

The post-colonial Indian state has failed miserably in resolving the issues raised by displaced people. The state has virtually abdicated its responsibility towards the victims of these movements. The postcolonial Indian State, the colonial legacy of communalism and various exclusionist identity movements have been the major actors in the political threat of massive internal displacement of people in India. If the present situation continues without any effective intervention, India is likely to experience more conflict induced internal displacement of population, particularly the marginalized groups in near future.

In the end it can be said that two lakhs of people who had survived that holocaust of ethnic cleansing were discriminated by all successive governments and denied their share in sociopolitical processes. One can often see this forgotten on roads, watch in televisions read in striving hard for their rights but all in vain. Whenever any stranger people visit these camps the old aged eyes start seeing with hope that if somebody is going to heal their wounds and will make effort to make the future better at least of their upcoming generations. It was for the first time Interlocutors on Kashmir today for the first time visited Bhour Camp to meet the PoK refugees dwelling there. Veteran journalist Dilip Padgaonkar, former Information Commissioner M M Ansari and academician Radha Kumar listened to the grievances of the displaced people camping there and assured them to raise their voice.

4.4 PEACE PROCESS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

- 4.4.0 Objectives**
- 4.4.1 Introduction**
- 4.4.2 Peace Process: Internal and External Dimensions**
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- 4.4.4 Peace Process: The External Dimension**
- 4.4.5 Stalling of the Peace Process**
- 4.4.6 Let Us Sum UP**

4.4.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson explains the issues related to displacement in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- understand the historical context for the displacement;
- various categories of internal displacement;
- Role of Government in addressing problems of displacement.

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Kashmir conflict is one of the most staggering conflicts in international politics, and its persistence involving two nuclear powers is well known. Even after four wars, a decisive resolution to the conflict appears unlikely -- the medley of treaties, agreements, and declarations notwithstanding. Though the parties involved in the conflict have their own perspectives

regarding the cause and course of conflict, almost all agree (at least in declarations and statements) that the region is in dire need of peace as well as substantial economic development. Indeed, decades of violence is on verge of ending without any positive achievement for the people.

4.4.2 PEACE PROCESS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS

The peace process in Jammu and Kashmir has two dimensions: the internal and the external. Internally, it is related to the failures as well as the successes of Indian politics. Externally, Kashmir must be linked to the larger Subcontinental quarrel between India and Pakistan. Though these two dimensions appear two different processes, however, both have inter-twinned with each other, when we identify the larger structural problems involved in the conflict. Hence, in the following section, we will try to understand the efforts so far initiated to bring peace in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, firstly by focusing on internal dimension, and later on the external dimension.

4.4.3 PEACE PROCESS: THE INTERNAL DIMENSION

The internal dimension to Kashmir conflict can be traced to the failure of the Centre and the authoritarianism prevalent in the Congress, the party that was in power for most part of the time in the post-independence India. It kept too much trust initially on Sheikh Abdullah without institutionalising the democratic structures and processes in the state. On the other hand, it was also unable to find a common ground with Sheikh Abdullah and his party while negotiating the post-Accession status of the Jammu and Kashmir within the Indian Union. The differences over this led not only to arresting Sheikh Abdullah but also arresting the entire democratic process in Jammu and Kashmir with imposed illegitimate governments that were not responsive to the prevailing political environment in the State. Later on, from the 1980s, the crisis in Kashmir is reflective of the larger crisis in India's political institutions. According to Kanti Bajpayee, the decay in India's political institutions had included "the steady organizational decline of the once-dominant Congress Party, the politicization of the civil services and judiciary, the reliance on the military to restore public order, and the overall lack of probity in public life. Moreover, from the early 1970s governments became increasingly centralized, resulting in conflicts between the

central government and emerging elites in different parts of India that frequently ended in the dismissal or subversion of legally constituted state governments. Demands for state-level autonomy, often portrayed as ‘threats to national integrity’, provided a justification for the imposition of central rule, which further alienated local elites and populations and added to provincial resentment. Kashmir, thus, has to be seen as part of this broader dialectic of Indian politics”.

You have already studied, in earlier lessons, how the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah government and replacing it with the G M Shah led to the political resentment in the State. Further, the alliance between the NC and Congress, the allegations during 1987 State Assembly elections drastically undermined the legitimacy of the both Central and State governments, which led to the collapse of all constitutional and democratic mechanisms. The intrusion of Pakistan sponsored violence inflated political instability which led to all democratic institutions and rise of militancy and terrorism. The democratic process was stalled almost for a decade.

Understanding the failure of the political actors in this entire process, the Centre, especially the successive Prime Ministers promised for the institutionalisation of democratic governments with fairness and transparency. The Centre also promised to delegate more autonomy to the state of Jammu and Kashmir to satisfy the aspirations of the ordinary Kashmiris. Since then the Centre has constituted many Committees and also appointed many interlocutors to negotiate with the all the stakeholders in Jammu and Kashmir. Some of these efforts are explained below.

4.4.3.1 Appointment of Interlocuters & Various Committees

The appointment of interlocutors as a tactic for coping with the Kashmir issue traces its origins back to the 1960s, when Prime Minister Nehru appointed Lal Bahadur Shastri to manage tensions following the chaotic events of 1963. Since then, a number of such initiatives have been launched, including a three-member team of interlocutors the central government appointed in response to the 2010 unrest.

K C Pant, 2001

In May 2001, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government announced the appointment of K C Pant, former Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, as its interlocutor on Kashmir, with the brief of talking to various groups in the Valley and recommending ways to ease tensions between the Centre and the state. At the time of Pant's appointment, Farooq Abdullah's National Conference government was in power in the state, and former R&AW chief Girish Chandra Saxena was Governor. Pant's mandate was limited, and there was no timeframe for him to submit his report, which meant the deliberations went on for long. Pant has been nominated to hold political dialogue with all sections of J&K including those who are outside it, in order to promote a vigorous movement towards establishment of peace and tranquillity.

Pant made his first visit to J&K from May 28 to June 2, 2001. He had interactions with various individuals and representatives of political parties, NGOs, the local media, human right bodies, and religious heads. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was cold to the Centre's outreach. Pant recommended broader autonomy for J&K, largely on the lines of the National Conference. He noted that support of the local people was crucial, and security forces should win the confidence of the people by exercising utmost restraint while launching search and combing operations. Pant suggested an urgent ramping up of both intelligence and security operations in the Valley.

Arun Jaitley, 2002; Ram Jethmalani, 2002

In 2002, the Vajpayee government tasked another committee, led by Law Minister Arun Jaitley, with the job. Its mandate was to explore the scope for "greater exclusivity" for Jammu and Kashmir, but the specifics were unclear. In the same year, an unofficial Kashmir Committee, headed by Jaitley's predecessor in the Law Ministry, Ram Jethmalani, held several rounds of talks with separatists to try to persuade them to join the J&K Assembly elections of 2002. The Jethmalani committee recommended that the elections be postponed to give the separatists time, and that polling be conducted under Governor's Rule. The Centre rejected the recommendations, and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) formed a coalition government with the Congress with Mufti Mohammed Sayeed as Chief Minister. Both these committees discussed the role of Pakistan in the Valley, and concluded that it was aiding, abetting and financing terrorist activities in the state, and pushing in well equipped and trained mercenaries to carry out so-called jihad against India.

N. N. Vohra

N. N. Vohra was appointed as India's interlocutor for carrying out the Jammu and Kashmir dialogue by the Government of India. Appointed by the NDA government in February 2003 in place of the then Planning Commission deputy chairman K.C. Pant, Vohra was retained in the job when the Manmohan Singh government took charge in May 2004. He remained as India's interlocutor till 2008, when he was appointed Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

As the interlocutor, Vohra had been holding wide-ranging discussions with both the elected representatives in the state and also the separatists in a bid to forge a common ground for the all-round development of the state. Many compliments N N Vohra when his efforts as interlocutor resulted in two rounds of talks between L K Advani, the then Home Minister, and the Hurriyat leaders. In fact, many security experts credit NN Vohra as the only successful interlocutor who has achieved some headway in the sense that he created an atmosphere for talks at apex level between Delhi and the Hurriyat Conference.

Based on Vohra's recommendation, the government announced a three-pronged strategy in J&K: strengthening border management, with proactive action against terrorists; accelerating economic development; and pursuing sustained dialogue with all groups and shades of opinion in consultation with the state government. This dialogue was followed up by UPA-1 and some CBMs like opening the Srinagar-Muzzafarabad route, review of detention cases in Kashmir and commitment to safeguard human rights were an indirect result of the efforts of the interlocutor.

Centre-Hurriyat Round Table Conference, 2005

On September 5, 2005, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met a Hurriyat delegation led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq. The Hurriyat agreed to call off strikes and bandhs in the Valley, and shun all forms of violence at all levels to carry forward the dialogue process in which all regions and all shades of political opinion in the state could be involved. A Joint Screening Committee was set up in Srinagar on October 3, 2005, which reviewed the cases of persons under detention under the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978. The Committee recommended the release of 44 detained individuals. Subsequently, on January 14, 2006, Prime Minister Singh held a meeting with a six-member delegation led by People's Conference chairman Sajad Lone.

Singh also met with another delegation led by Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front leader Yasin Malik on February 17 that year.

In February 2006, Manmohan Singh announced a Round Table Conference, which was welcomed by all Kashmiri mainstream political parties. He constituted five working groups on Jammu and Kashmir to grab the initiative for ushering in a phase of development by creating conditions of permanent peace in the troubled state. Reports of the four out of the five Working Groups on Jammu and Kashmir were submitted in 2007. The Third Round Table Conference was held in April 2007 during which there was almost a consensus on the need to implement the recommendations of the Working Groups. The Fifth report on Centre-State relations was also subsequently submitted by Justice Saghir Ahmed. The roundtable on Centre-state relations, led by Justice Saghir Ahmed, a former Chief Justice of J&K High Court, cited representations on autonomy and self-rule, but did not spell out its recommendations. It did not elicit a clear response from the central government. Some of the crucial recommendations of the Working Group on Confidence Building Measures, headed by former Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari, like providing an investigating wing to the State Human Rights Commission have still not been implemented. The Group on strengthening relations across the Line of Control (LoC), headed by former Foreign Secretary M K Rasgotra, had suggested that eligibility for travel and visit across LoC should not remain restricted to members of divided families only but should be expanded to groups of persons who want to visit places of religious interest and tourism. The Group, chaired by former Member-Secretary Planning Commission N C Saxena, recommended for the measures required to ensure good governance in the State.

Interlocutors Group October 2010

The Central appointed the J&K Interlocutors Group on October 13, 2010. They are, noted journalist Dilip Padgaonkar, Prof. M. M. Ansari, Information Commissioner and Prof. (Mrs) Radha Kumar, trustee of Delhi Policy Group. The Government of India notification stated that “The three interlocutors, appointed by the Government, have been entrusted with the responsibility of undertaking a sustained dialogue with the people of Jammu and Kashmir to understand their problems and chart a course for the future”. The terms and references of the panel will be to hold talks all shades of opinion including political parties, groups, students, civil society, separatists and other stakeholders in all the three regions—Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir.

The Interlocutors Group submitted the Report to the Home Ministry. The recommendations of the Group can broadly be divided in to categories: political; and socio-economic. The Group also recommended for a roadmap to address the Kashmir problem.

Political Recommendations:

- The Group recommended that a Constitutional Committee (CC) should be set up to review all the central Acts that have been extended to the state of Jammu and Kashmir since 1952. The CC should come out with its findings within six months. According to the Group, the CC should review whether, and to what extent, the application of central acts to the state has led to an erosion of the state's special status.
- The word 'Temporary' in Article 370 should be replaced with 'Special' which has been used for certain states such as Assam, Nagaland, Andhra Pradesh.
- Central laws shall only be made applicable to the state if they relate to the country's security or a vital economic interest, especially in the areas of energy and water resources.
- Currently, the Governor is appointed by the President. The Group recommended that the state government shall give three names for consideration for the position to the President. However, the Governor shall finally be appointed by the President.
- Separate Regional Councils for Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh should be created and certain legislative, executive and financial powers should be devolved to them. The subjects that could be transferred to the Regional Council include prison reforms, public health, roads and bridges and fisheries.

Cultural, Economic and Social Recommendations:

- There are 16 centrally sponsored schemes which are mostly funded by the centre. However, most of the funds for these schemes have not been utilised properly. The Group recommended that an effective system to monitor these schemes should be put in place.
- An expert committee to review the state's financial needs should be constituted.

- The central government should tap the hydro-electricity potential of the state. Till date only 15 per cent of the potential has been harnessed. Additional hydro-electricity projects should be established for which the central government should meet the entire equity capital.
- Industrial establishments and other buildings occupied by the security officers should be vacated.
- Financial package of incentives on the pattern given to the North Eastern States should be given to the state.
- The hilly, remote areas should be declared as special development zones.
- The restrictions on the internet and mobile phones should be reviewed.

In order to fulfil these recommendations, the Interlocutor's Group proposed the following roadmap:

- The 'stone pelters' and political prisoners against whom no serious charges have been framed should be released.
- There should an amendment and review of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1990 and the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978.
- The state policy should provide for the return of Kashmiri Pandits.
- A judicial commission to supervise the identification of bodies buried in the unmarked graves should be established.

However, according to Dilip Padgaonkar, the Group's Chairman, "by and large the report was ignored by the UPA. I had been assured that the report would be tabled on the floor of the House and that there would be a debate on it and all the parties would be allowed enough space to deliberate on the recommendations, but that was not done. And the present government has not done it either. Had they taken some serious notice of the recommendations we had made, perhaps we would not have reached the situation we have in Kashmir today."

Dineshwar Sharma as interlocutor 2017

After waiting over a year since Kashmir first began to show signs of unraveling, the government of India appointed former Intelligence Bureau chief Dineshwar Sharma as interlocutor for Jammu and Kashmir last October. Given the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) hardline stance towards Kashmir, Sharma's appointment as interlocutor was met with both surprise and skepticism from stakeholders across the Valley. It occurred near the end of 2017 when, even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his fourth Independence Day speech made the bold pronouncement that the Kashmir issue "cannot be resolved by either bullets or abuses" but by "embracing all Kashmiris." Though the appointment of Sharma sparked some optimism in the Valley, little has been done to address local concerns.

At first, Sharma appeared eager to talk to all stakeholders in Kashmir, including separatists. He even managed to meet with a pro-dialogue separatist leader, Professor Abdul Ghani Bhat. Still, little else has changed on the ground. During previous dialogues, New Delhi would create an environment amenable to dialogue by releasing political prisoners, reviewing the cases of detainees under the Public Safety Act, and allowing the Hurriyat to hold public meetings. This time, however, separatist leaders were periodically placed under house arrest, raids by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) did not cease, and other political prisoners were not released. Given these conditions, Sharma's appointment did not generate much hope in the Valley.

4.4.3.2 Scepticism towards Centre's Initiatives

Most of the Kashmiris are sceptical about the Centre's initiative to address the political problems in Jammu and Kashmir through intermediaries. Separatists from the Hurriyat Conference view India's appointment of interlocutors as a time-buying tactic aimed at temporarily defusing a period of unrest without making concessions on political issues. They point out continuous failure of many interlocutors and committees in resolving the problems in Kashmir. The 2010 interlocutors, for instance, published a highly anticipated report after visiting the state and meeting with relevant stakeholders. However, their findings were ultimately dismissed by policymakers, much to the dismay of Kashmiris throughout the Valley.

However, there is considerable difference between the earlier governments and present government in the Centre. The Narendra Modi government has approached the Kashmir problem

with hard-line policy. For instance, according to security experts, though Dineswara Sharma has been appointed by Narendra Modi government as an interlocuter, however, Sharma was later advised by New Delhi not to approach separatist leadership, he must interact only if they meet him. Through this communication to Sharma, New Delhi wished to signal that mainstream political parties—who separatists contend do not credibly represent the people of Kashmir—are the only relevant stakeholders. An irrelevant Hurriyat, according to these security experts, would help New Delhi “decouple” the Kashmir issue from Pakistan, after which Kashmiris will no longer be a third party in the bilateral dispute between India and Pakistan.

More seriously, the internal dimension to the Kashmir, as a political problem, is almost ceased to be part of the agenda of present government when it changed the status of Jammu and Kashmir from that of a “state with a special status” to one of India’s Union Territory on August 05, 2019. The new Jammu and Kashmir Act, which replaced all the earlier acts, endowed the state with a new status of Union Territories in India, as many other regions in India, for example, Pondicherry. By altering the status of Jammu and Kashmir, the Government of India has clearly pronounced its non-recognition of space for existence of internal dimension to Kashmir problem to negotiate further.

4.4.4 PEACE PROCESS: THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION

The external dimension to the peace process emanates from the Pakistan’s non-reconciliation of the Kashmir’s accession to India and indulging into anti-India activities in various ways, such as: a) attempt to politicise the Kashmir problem in various international forums; b) indulging in a war with India to forcibly alter the boundary; c) supporting and training armed groups to fight in Kashmir with Indian security forces; d) supporting Jihadi forces that indulge in terrorist activities across India.

Ever since the subcontinent was divided on religious lines, India and Pakistan are also involved in negotiations to address the problems between them. In reality, till recently, the frequency of negotiations is much higher than the frequency of war; while the dialogue is continuously taking place, the war or terrorist attacks on India are halting these negotiations. One of the important dimensions related to India-Pakistan peace process is that while the civil leadership in Pakistan, across the political spectrum, is more or less inclined to peace, the military leadership is

unwilling to the same except for one or two occasions. Unfortunately, since it is the military that is in dominant position in Pakistan rather than the civil leadership, peace process is not forwarding much between these two countries.

In the following sections, we study some aspects related to India-Pakistan relations, which constituted as external dimension to Kashmir's peace process

4.4.4.1 India-Pakistan Negotiations

In 1972, most of the security experts and scholars considered that Kashmir as dispute between India and Pakistan had lost relevance with the emergence of East Pakistan as new nation-state, Bangladesh, and the conclusion of Shimla agreement between India and Pakistan, which more or less settled the borders between them. However, three important developments since second half of 1970s and first half of 1980s again brought tensions between both the neighbours. These are: a) the replacement of democratic government in Pakistan with military rule of General Zia-ul-Haq; b) rise of al-Qaida and Taliban in Afghanistan; c) growth of Jihadi forces in Pakistan; d) collapse of democratic process in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1980s. All these developments have culminated in the rise of violence in Kashmir, which is still continuing.

Realising importance of India having good relations with all its neighbours as a rising power in the world, I.K. Gujral the then External Affairs Minister, later on Prime Minister took initiatives to improve relations with all the neighbours, including Pakistan in 1997. His policy, known as 'Gujral doctrine' mainly based on resolving all the disputes with the neighbours peacefully by India doing whatever it can without any reciprocity from others. As part of this, India agreed to resume dialogue with Pakistan by constituting joint working groups, including one on Kashmir. However, despite this effort, not much progress had been achieved during Gujral's tenure.

However, it was during the tenure of Atal Bihari Vajpayee as Prime Minister that substantial peace negotiations were initiated between India and Pakistan. During a meeting between Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharief on the sidelines of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) meeting in New York in September 1998, it was decided to start dialogue on the identified eight issues. In October 1998, the foreign secretaries of India and Pakistan initiated discussion on two of the issues including 'Kashmir' and 'peace and security'. Later, discussion

on other six issues was also started. This process culminated in the Vajpayee's historical visit to Lahore where Lahore Declaration and the Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries affirmed the commitment of two countries to the composite dialogue. The Kargil war, three months later, however, led to the collapse of this process.

Vajpayee-Musharraf Agra Summit

For many India-Pakistan observers, the Agra Summit is one of the greatest missed opportunities of India-Pakistan relations. Former Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri in his book *Neither a Hawk nor a Dove* wrote that the "solution to Kashmir was in the grasp of both governments". Then Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf had proposed what was called the 'Four-point solution' to Kashmir. According to different accounts, the solution was, in principle, acceptable to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee but the deal fell through hours before the signing ceremony. The Musharraf plan's four points were: 1) demilitarisation or phased withdrawal of troops; 2) there will be no change of borders of Kashmir, however, people of Jammu & Kashmir will be allowed to move freely across the Line of Control (LoC); 3) Self-governance without independence to both sides of Jammu and Kashmir; 4) a joint supervision mechanism in Jammu and Kashmir involving India, Pakistan and Kashmir.

According to former Pakistan Foreign Minister Kasuri, there was only one man who became a roadblock in the peace deal – separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Kasuri wrote in his book, "He (Geelani) described President Musharraf's four-point agenda as vague, and criticised the president's statement on UNSC resolutions' relevance to Kashmir." He added, "Fortunately, other Kashmiri leaders I met recognised the need for unity in the ranks of Kashmiris. They were more pragmatic and by and large unwilling to go along with Geelani's rigid approach." For some others, like A S Dulat, former chief of India's RAW, the then India's deputy Prime Minister LK Advani had reservations about some of the aspects proposed by Musharraf.

The deadlock that has prevailed since the Agra Summit again broken in January 2004 during the SAARC meeting in Islamabad. The joint press statement issued on the occasion, Vajpayee and Musharraf welcomed 'the recent steps towards normalisation of relations between the two countries' and also expressed the hope 'that the positive trends set by the CBMs would

be consolidated.’ While Prime Minister Vajpayee stated that ‘in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented’, he was assured by Musharraf that ‘he will not permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.’ Musharraf further emphasised that ‘a sustained and productive dialogue addressing all issues would lead to positive results.’ Following this development, various meetings of the foreign secretaries and foreign ministers took place in which talks were held around various matters concerning India and Pakistan.

Manmohan Singh and Musharraf Meet

India and Pakistan experienced best of their relations during the tenure of Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister. In September 2004 meeting between Manmohan Singh and Musharraf in New York, the issue of Jammu and Kashmir was addressed. Both sides agreed to explore ‘possible options for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the issue’ in a sincere spirit and purposeful manner. It was during the third composite dialogue took place in January 2006, the formal meeting between the foreign secretaries of the two countries took place. During this meeting apart from commitment to continue consultations on security and nuclear doctrines for conventional and nuclear CBMs, the commitment to start a bus service between Poonch and Rawlakot and a truck service on Muzaffarabad-Srinagar road for trade in permitted goods was reiterated. These routes were also later opened for the cross-LoC trade purposes.

4.4.5 STALLING OF THE PEACE PROCESS

Peace process, on the whole, remained quite vibrant till 2006 and started losing its momentum in 2007 due to the internal problems within Pakistan and later on because of the tensions between India and Pakistan following Mumbai Terror Attack. However, unlike the earlier times, when the peace process would be reversed following any tension between India and Pakistan, this time the process was not reversed. It was slowed and later stalled to the extent that movement forward did not take place. Efforts continue to be made off and on for giving momentum to the process. Besides the Mumbai terror attack, there have been more recent issues between India and Pakistan. Especially during the 2012-2013 period there have been escalation of tensions on the border. Besides the issue of beheading of Indian soldiers, there have been other issues which

have resulted in the strain in the relationship between the two countries. The cross-bordering firing which was almost stopped for a long period, again resumed and intensified since 2016. The growing attacks on Indian security forces, especially the attacks in Uri and Pulwama, further intensified tension between both the countries as India crossed border twice to attack militant training camps in Pakistan and POK.

The Government of India's decision to alter the status of Jammu and Kashmir from that of state with special status to Union Territory more or less eliminated any space for negotiations between India and Pakistan. Even the present Government at the Centre has clearly pronounced that only issue it is willing to negotiate with Pakistan is with regard to POK. Hence, it can be assumed that the tensions in Jammu and Kashmir will continue in near future.

4.4.6 LET US SUM UP

The people of Jammu and Kashmir are more aware of the need for peace in their conflict-ridden society. The conflict has imposed huge misery on social and psychological make of the population and also brought economic distress to them. Slow development is only attributed to violence in Kashmir. The ongoing conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir has not only effected its socio-economic structure but has also resulted in displacement of many households. There has been damage to infrastructure, and annual economy growth lagged behind as compared to national level. Tourism, the most important economic means for substantial population, suffered tremendously. Violence has effected 'the development scenario in the state of J&K, thereby not only discouraging private investment, but also creating obstacles in implementation of developmental policies initiated by public authorities. However, the situation prevailed at present is not giving any indication for restoration of peace in Jammu and Kashmir, neither internally nor with regard to its borders, in the near future.