

# PSA Was Expected from 'autocratic' Regime, Says Mufti



**SRINAGAR :** After she was slapped with the Public Safety Act (PSA), former chief minister and People's Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday said that it was expected from an "autocratic" regime. "Ms Mufti received a PSA order sometime back. Slapping the draconian PSA on 2 ex J&K CMs is expected from an autocratic regime that books 9 year

olds for 'seditious remarks'. Question is how much longer will we act as bystanders as they desecrate what this nation stands for," says a tweet from her official account, which is currently operated by Mufti's daughter Iltija following the PDP chief's detention last year. Mufti along with former chief minister and National Conference leader Omar

Abdullah were booked under the PSA today. Both former Jammu and Kashmir chief ministers were detained after the government abrogated Article 370 last year. Mufti's daughter said that Kashmir's been reduced to "Dante's inferno" for the living since "illegal" the abrogation."180 days later, we continue to be deprived of

fundamental rights & have suffered grave economic & psychological tribulations. According to recent estimates, commerce & industry have reported losses close to 18,000 crores & counting. This figure is nearly thrice of what J&K's economy suffered due to floods in 2014. GOI willfully facilitated & watched on as a man-made blockade broke

the back of our economy," she stated in the letter."GOI claims that Article 370 was scrapped for well-being & economic prosperity of people of Jammu & Kashmir but facts point otherwise. Disruption & chaos have been the norm for BJP but it's clear that there is no exit strategy to contain the fall out of ill thought out decision," it said.

## Dgp Holds Security Review Meeting In Awantipora

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Shri Dilbag Singh today directed the Police officers to take stringent action against the elements found involved in unlawful activities to prevent crime and to keep check on criminal elements in the society, and exhorted upon them to focus on quality Crime disposal while dealing with law & order and counter insurgency operations.

The DGP was chairing a meeting of the District Police officers and other senior Police officers to review the crime and security situation at Awantipora. DIG SKR Shri Atul Goel, SSP Awantipora Shri Tahir Saleem, SDPOs, other gazetted officers of the district, SHOs and I/C Police Posts attended the meeting besides.

While addressing the meeting, Shri Dilbag Singh urged the officers to work with greater zeal and dedication to get the desir-

able achievements in different fields. He said that J&K Police has a big challenge to fight militancy and maintaining of law & order in the Union Territory and added that due attention should be given to other crimes and prevention of criminal activities.

Shri Dilbag Singh directed senior officers to conduct regular crime review meetings with the SDPOs and SHOs to improve the disposal of crime cases and conviction rate. He also directed jurisdictional officers to give special focus on crime against the women and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO). He said that already issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) should be strictly adhered to deal with such type of cases. He directed senior officers to closely monitor such issues, and cases. He emphasized for prompt, fair and efficient service delivery so

as to redress the genuine grievances of common masses.

Stressing to put an effective measure for the elimination of drug menace, the DGP urged upon officers to look for and apprehend main suppliers of drugs while handling drug peddlers.

The DGP directed to organise workshops at district level for IOs and lower subordinates to brief and sensitize them regarding the provision and rules to be followed while investigating NDPS cases.

He said that those inimical elements involved in unlawful activities should be booked under the Public Safety Act to deter others involved in criminal activities.

He directed for organizing more Civic Action Programmes to engage youths in sports and cultural activities and provide platform to show their talent to the nation.

Dilbag Singh appreciated the role of police personnel during their recent anti-militancy operations in Anantnag, Shopian and Awantipora districts. He said that good number of militants were killed in these operations and exhorted to continue with similar operations in future as well.

Referring to the recent successful encounter at Ban Toll Plaza and the arrest of OGWs of JeM, the DGP stressed for smashing the nexus of OGWs effectively. He said that priority is to identify the inter-district OGWs network and the elements facilitating the movement of militants so as to uproot them. He directed to intensify counter-insurgency operations to neutralize the remaining militants.

The jurisdictional officers briefed the DGP regarding the functioning and work done on different fronts by them and their offices.

## Bijbehara, Budgam Parts Shut Against Militant Killings

**SRINAGAR:** Amid stone-pelting incidents, Bijbehara town of South Kashmir's Anantnag district observed a complete shutdown against the killing of a local militant.

Two militants Khateeb from Waghama Bijbehara and Zia-ur-Rehman from Arth Budgam were killed in broad-day shootout in Srinagar outskirts near Laywopora on Wednesday. A trooper was also killed in the shoot-out while

a youth was injured.

Eyewitnesses said that Bijbehara town and its adjoining areas including Sangam, Sri Gufwara, Wofzan, Kaniwan, Mehand, Zulpara, Urnhai, Arwani remained shut to mourn the killing of Hizb militant Khateeb. Witnesses added that shops and business establishments remained closed while skeletal movement of transport was observed on the roads.

Stray incidents of stone-pelting were reported from some parts of the town. A complete shutdown was also observed in Arth village and surrounding areas in Budgam.

Earlier, thousands of people participated in the funeral prayers of these militants in their respective villages while authorities had made elaborate security arrangements to maintain law and order. (KNT)

## Suspect Arrested In Lal Chowk Grenade Attack Case

**SRINAGAR:** A man who allegedly hurled a grenade on CRPF personnel at Lal Chowk here was arrested on Thursday, official sources said.

A grenade was hurled on CRPF personnel posted on duty near Pratap Park in busy

Lal Chowk area of the city on Sunday, injuring two troopers and seven civilians.

Naveed Lateef, a resident of Pulwama district, was arrested from the city in the early hours and he is being questioned, the official sources said.

They said Naveed was preparing for the NEET at a coaching centre here.

DGP Dilbagh Singh on Wednesday had told reporters that police had got clues in the Lal Chowk grenade attack case and a breakthrough was expected soon.

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### Omar, Mehbooba Slapped With PSA

signing a bond not to indulge in political activity, but at least 10 continue to be held," sources added.

Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti have not been moved to their own homes, but continue to be held in government accommodation. But a top source in the Jammu and Kashmir government said they would be shifted to their homes before the weekend, the report added.

The removal of Jammu and Kashmir's special status was met with angry protests by the Opposition -- P Chidambaram called it a "grave mistake" -- but the government, on the other hand, contended that it had corrected a "historic blunder".

### Sagar, Madani Too Booked Under PSA

in downtown city, was served with a PSA notice public order by the authorities.

Similarly, senior PDP leader Sartaj Madani was booked under the PSA. Madani is the maternal uncle of former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti.

Both Sagar and Madani were detained in the aftermath of August 5 crackdown by the Centre on politicians following abrogation of special status of the erstwhile state, besides its bifurcation into two union territories.

Their six-month preventive custody was ending on Thursday.

Earlier, the officials had said that former NC legislator Bashir Ahmed Veeri was also booked under the PSA but later it turned out that he had been released.

### Lg Takes Stock Of Security

grid of the valley, including the strengthening of check points at the sensitive locations.

The IGP also briefed about the initiatives taken for enhancing the synergy and coordination among various forces operating at the ground level.

He presented an overview of the steps initiated by the security forces in the valley to counter the challenges faced at the ground level.

Murmu applauded the efforts of security forces, particularly the police, in maintaining peace and stability in Jammu and Kashmir despite challenges.

He appreciated that JK Police has rendered countless sacrifices for ensuring peace in the valley and exhorted the officers to ensure that criminal elements are kept under check.

He laid emphasis on strengthening coordination among the forces so as to ensure a crime-free society

### J&K Enjoying Life Post Art- 370:

when Kashmiri Pandits started leaving the valley due to militancy.

The prime minister said statements made by former chief ministers Mehbooba Mufti, Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah on the abrogation of provisions of Article 370 are not acceptable.

"Many said that Kashmir will be on fire if

Article 370 is removed. Many are questioning us for detaining some political leaders. On August 5, Mehbooba Mufti said that India had betrayed Kashmir and we would have been better with deciding otherwise in 1947. Can we accept such people? PM said.

"Omar Abdullah said that removing Article 370 will separate Kashmir from India. Farooq Abdullah said that if Article 370 is removed then no one will unfurl the national flag in Kashmir. How can we side with them," he asked.

Modi said such statements made by the former chief ministers were unacceptable.

"These are leaders who don't trust Kashmiri people that is why they used such language. But we trusted Kashmiris and abrogated Article 370," he said.

The prime minister said Kashmir is the crown jewel of India and his government has faith in the people of the valley where development measures are being taken.

"The abrogation of Article 370 has led to the complete integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country," he said.

He said the real identity of Jammu and Kashmir is its egalitarian attitude towards all faiths and its Sufi tradition, and added that the region cannot be left behind.

The prime minister said the restrictions imposed in the Union Territory are being removed and union ministers are going to various of parts of the region, getting direct feedback from the people. The government would definitely act upon the feedback, he said.

Modi said his government is committed to work for the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and for its all round development.

He said Ladakh would be developed as a carbon neutral Union Territory.

With PTI inputs

### Move Beyond Rhetoric: PDP tells PM

Jammu & Kashmir post-August 5, besides those who have been illegally kept under detention just for having a contrary opinion over the government's decision to abrogate Article 370 and downgrading the state to a Union Territory," Tak said adding that illegal and unjustified detention of three former Chief Ministers and former legislators "itself amounts to coercion".

He said that when the Prime Minister recalls the statements made by the former chief minister regarding special status of Jammu & Kashmir, he failed to mention the sacrifice leaders and workers from mainstream political parties have made for the country.

"Today the same people who sworn oath of constitution and serve the nation are being questioned and targeted", he said adding that be it unemployed youth, government employees, business community, traders, transporters or any section of the society, everyone is feeling the pain of losing statehood and special identity.

"The BJP's 'Jinn' of development is yet to come out of the bottle and instead everything which the people of Jammu & Kashmir so proudly owned is being snatched under a planned conspiracy," he said adding that the void between administration and general masses has widened.

He said that instead of rhetoric the Union government must restore democracy and allow political process to be resumed in Jammu & Kashmir. "There was no alternative to

sincere and meaningful political outreach through dialogue and reconciliation".

### Saudi Reluctant To Accept Pak Plea

United Arab Emirates - key financial backers of the cash-strapped country.

The report by Dawn News came ahead of the bloc's senior officials' meeting in Jeddah on February 9 to make preparations for the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM).

Islamabad's feeling of unease with the OIC over its failure to get the CFM's meeting appears to be growing, as Riyadh was showing reluctance to convene the meeting on Kashmir on Pakistan's request, the report quoted a diplomatic source as saying.

The Jeddah-headquartered bloc, which is the second largest intergovernmental body after the UN, has usually been supportive of Pakistan and often sided with Islamabad on the Kashmir issue.

Prime Minister Khan voiced frustration over the OIC's silence on Kashmir during his visit to Malaysia.

"The reason is that we have no voice and there is a total division amongst (us). We can't even come together as a whole on the OIC meeting on Kashmir," he said this week.

Pakistan has been pushing for the foreign ministers' meeting on Kashmir since India abrogated the special provisions of Kashmir in August last year.

Although there has been a meeting of the contact group on Kashmir on the sidelines of UN General Assembly session in New York and a report by the OIC's Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission on the alleged rights abuses in Kashmir, no progress could be made towards the CFM's meeting.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, while underscoring the importance of CFM for Pakistan, said it was needed to send a clear message from Ummah (community) on the Kashmir issue.

Support from Riyadh is considered a must for any move at the OIC, which is dominated by Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries from the Gulf.

The kingdom has made several proposals to Pakistan to avoid the CFM including holding of a parliamentary forum or speakers' conference from Muslim countries and, according to a source, a joint meeting on Palestine and Kashmir issues. Pakistan has persisted with its proposal so far.

Saudi Arabia, soon after Pakistan's absence at the Malaysia summit, showed flexibility in December on the proposal for the CFM on Kashmir. The Saudi flexibility, however, was short-lived as Riyadh reverted to its position.

### India Slams Kashmir Reference In Pak,

and Pakistan at the end of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit recorded that the Pakistani premier had raised the issue of Kashmir during talks with his Malaysian counterpart Mahathir bin Mohamad.

Khan had also thanked Mahathir bin Mohamad for "speaking up" on the Kashmir issue.

India-Malaysia ties have been hit in recent times following the remarks by Malaysia on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the Kashmir issue.

In December, India had summoned the Charge d'Affaires of the Malaysian embassy and lodged a strong protest with him over

the Malaysian Prime Minister's "insensitive" comments criticising the new citizenship law.

### Elevated Light Rail System

said.

He said this would not only facilitate easy and quick movement of people but also have a positive impact on the economy and quality of life in these cities.

The Light Rail Transit System (LRTS) in Jammu will have one corridor from Bantalab to Bari Brahmana with a total length of 23 kilometers, while the LRTS in Srinagar will have two corridors, one from Indira Nagar to HMT Junction and second from Usmanabad to Hazuri Bagh, with a total length of 25 kilometers, the spokesman said.

He said the capital cost of the project, at current prices, including land, rehabilitation and resettlement and taxes, is estimated to be Rs 4,825 crore for Jammu LRTS and Rs 5,734 crore for Srinagar LRTS.

The Housing and Urban Development Department has prepared the final Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) in this regard, the spokesman said.

He said the Administrative Council authorised the Housing and Urban Development Department to submit the DPRs of the proposals to Union government for appraisal and funding including external funding.

The project is expected to be completed by December 2024, the spokesman said.

### J&K To Ban Private Practice Of Doctors

of doctors is allowed.

There have been many complaints of doctors preferring to treat patients in their private clinics rather in government hospitals.

The step is apparently aimed at improving the functioning of government hospitals and medical colleges across the Union Territory and for making doctors more accessible for the patients.

Meanwhile, the government is improving the health infrastructure by building new colleges and opening of two AIIMS, one each in Jammu and the Kashmir Valley.

### Kashmiri Politicians In Dilemma After Release

Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti among other senior politicians who were placed under detention on August 5 last year when Article 370 was abrogated.

Besides the three former chief ministers, Abdur Rahim Rather, Ali Muhammad Sagar, Naeem Akhtar, Mubarak Gul and former IAS officer Shah Faesal are among those still under detention inside the MLA hostel in Srinagar which has been declared as a sub-jail.

Kashmiri politicians who have been released after their detention on August 5 last year have denied that they had given any undertaking to the authorities as a pre-condition to their release.

"I have given no undertaking and the authorities have revoked my detention without any pre-condition", said a senior mainstream politician who was released recently, but continues to remain under house arrest in Srinagar.

Authorities are considering the release of all other detained Kashmiri politicians in

the coming days although there is no clarity on whether or not the three former chief ministers would also be released sometime soon.

Reports that the authorities are considering action for alleged criminal involvement against some of the detained leaders are also hot in the power corridors of the newly-created Union Territory.

"Everyone of us has to pay for his or her sins. That is the law of nature and there is no escaping from this fundamental reality", said a top security officer who did not want to be named.

What comes as a serious blow to the future of these mainstream politicians is that the common man hardly appears to be bothered about their release.

"I was a poor rickshaw driver when these leaders flew in aeroplanes and helicopters. I remain a rickshaw driver when they are under detention. Their release is of no consequence to my daily struggle for survival," said Javid Rather, a local rickshaw driver.

Having raised hopes of autonomy, self-rule and other so-called vision documents among their voters, all mainstream politicians of Kashmir will have to eat more than their share of humble pie when they face voters in the next elections.

"The best they can now demand is statehood. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has already said during his speech in the Parliament when Article 370 was abrogated that statehood would be restored to J&K when the situation returns to normal.

"What is there to bargain for that the mainstream politicians can promise the people now?" said Suhail Mir, a local advocate.

Ironically, talking of development, health-care, education, tourism and trade have never remained among top electoral promises of the mainstream parties in Kashmir.

To match the 'Azadi' slogan of the separatists, local politicians have always spoken of J&K's special status and establishing of Kashmir as a free trade zone between India and Pakistan.

It is literally impossible for the regional political parties to convince people that they would get Article 370 back once voted to power.

Statehood is not something that finds great favour with the local people especially if the demand comes from those politicians who have promised the sky to Kashmiris in the past.

In a nutshell, the difference between politicians of national and regional mainstream parties has shrunk to such an extent that there is very little for Kashmiri politicians to catch the imagination of voters in future.

### Body Of Jaish Militant Found After 17 Days

at the time.

The police recovered body of Rayees on Thursday. He hailed from Tral in Pulwama district in south Kashmir. The identity of the militant was established after finding a wallet and a driving license.

### Cop Injured In Lal

Bazar 'Grenade Attack' city on Wednesday while one alleged militant was caught alive in an injured condition.