

Occupied Kashmir, Betrayed by the Rulers of Muslims

According to Dawn News, August 19th 2026, the Foreign Office (FO) had lodged a “strong demarche” to the US charge d’affaires in Islamabad over “factually incorrect remarks” by the US ambassador to India regarding the status of Jammu and Kashmir during his visit to the disputed region.

The FO statement included the following, “Pakistan strongly condemned and categorically rejected the characterisation of Jammu and Kashmir as a ‘part of India’... It was underscored that Jammu and Kashmir is an internationally recognised disputed territory, awaiting final disposition in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people...”

Every year, Kashmir returns to our screens. Politicians make impassioned speeches. Promises of unwavering solidarity are repeated. Posters are printed, slogans are chanted, and the sentiment of brotherhood proclaimed. Yet, solidarity means little if it exists only when the cameras are watching.

The Muslim world, and Pakistan in particular, have long condemned the suffering of Kashmiris under Indian administration. But recent events in Pakistan-administered Kashmir raise an uncomfortable question: what does our solidarity amount to if Kashmiris can also face force, intimidation, or violence under those who claim to stand with them?

For years, international attention has focused on Indian-administered Kashmir, where allegations of human rights violations have been documented.

Mass detentions, prolonged curfews, restrictions on communication, the use of pellet-firing shotguns against civilians, and reports of enforced disappearances have contributed to an atmosphere of terror. The revocation of Article 370 in 2019 further intensified concerns, stripping the region of its semi-autonomous status and increasing direct control from New Delhi. Kashmiris have been living with increased militarisation and shrinking civil liberties.

Pakistan has long positioned itself as Kashmir’s defender. Successive governments have condemned Indian actions before international forums, observed Kashmir Solidarity Day, and repeatedly affirmed political and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri cause. Pakistani leaders have invoked the issue at the United Nations, framed it as a matter of self-determination, and presented themselves as advocates for a population denied its fundamental rights.

Yet, recent actions by the Pakistani government may as well prove where its loyalties truly lie.

Those loyalties were laid bare by Pakistan’s Defence Minister, Khawaja Asif, who defended the violence by declaring that he regarded protesters in Pakistan-administered Kashmir as “enemies like India.” This was not the statement of an anonymous official or partisan commentator, but of the country’s Defence Minister, the very man entrusted with the use of state force. For a government that claims to be the foremost defender of the Kashmiri people, to liken protesting Kashmiris to an

enemy is an extraordinary act of hypocrisy and a betrayal of the very cause Pakistan insists it champions.

In Pakistan-administered Kashmir, demonstrations over economic conditions and governance have reportedly been met with brutal force by security personnel, leading to deaths, injuries, and widespread criticism from the Muslim world. While the political context differs significantly from that across the Line of Control, one truth remains unchanged: when civilians protesting for dignity and accountability are met with batons and bullets, the colour of the uniform or the flag it bears does not lessen the violence inflicted. The moral distinction so often emphasised in political discourse begins to blur.

If Pakistan condemns the suppression of Kashmiris under Indian administration, what does it say when allegations of excessive force emerge within territory under Pakistan's own control? Can solidarity be measured only by speeches abroad while criticism is silenced at home?

These questions are not an attempt to equate the circumstances on either side of the Line of Control. The historical, legal, and political realities remain distinct. Rather, they expose a broader pattern in which states frequently invoke Kashmir when it serves diplomatic interests while falling short of the standards they demand of others.

Al-Nu'man ibn Bashir reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, **«تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَوَادِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ الْجَسَدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى عُضْوًا تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ جَسَدِهِ بِالْسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَى»** **“The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”** (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 6011, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2586)

This contradiction is especially significant for Pakistan, a state that claims Islam to be the pillar of its very identity and existence, and whose leaders frequently invoke the language of calling to Muslim unity, though this act is merely reserved for personal convenience and propaganda posters.

The Ummah must demand more than empty statements of support and crocodile tears. It must demand both the enlightenment of our minds and the mobilisation of our armed forces in defence of our Muslim brothers and sisters, not the deployment of those same forces to spill Muslim blood.

Our obligation, then, should not be blind loyalty to states, flags, or political narratives, but to the obligations sent upon us by Allah (swt). Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا﴾** **“And whoever kills a believer intentionally, their reward will be Hell—where they will stay indefinitely. Allah will be displeased with them, condemn them, and will prepare for them a tremendous punishment.”** [TMQ Surah An-Nisa 4:93].

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