Draft

# Abstract

This study examines the inclusive development in Jammu and Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370. The paper comprehensively explores various aspects of development in both regions, including an analysis of employment opportunities for local youths, both direct and indirect. The central and state governments play a crucial role in fostering trust among the local population through the implementation of diverse welfare schemes. Furthermore, the study focuses on the pivotal role of the tourism sector, which serves as the backbone of the state economy. It also investigates the government’s efforts in providing employment opportunities to the youth and reviews the new reservation policy for weaker sections of the state post the abrogation of Article 370. It is important to note that the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir’s special state status by the central government has resulted in a change in its statehood, dividing it into two union territories. Additionally, the study delves into the recent elections held in the region, analyzing their implications on local governance and the ongoing debate over the restoration of statehood.

# Keywords: Development, statehood, elections, Abrogation and Delimitation.

**Objective:**

The research tries to provide an in-depth analysis of the transformative changes in Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370, looking into its impact on governance and the socio- economic fabric of the region. In this respect, it shows the integration of central laws and their impact on governance at macro and grassroots levels. The evaluation of infrastructural and industrial development thereafter is an integral part of the research so as to assess its contribution towards driving economic growth, inviting investment, and securing employment opportunities for the local populace. Furthermore, the research aims to assess the efficiency of a wide range of welfare schemes and policies after August 2019, especially their reach and impact on marginalized sections of society, like women, youth, and economically weaker groups.

The research also looks into people's sentiments about how this fits into policy decisions, particularly in relation to the ongoing debate concerning Jammu and Kashmir remaining a Union Territory as opposed to being conferred statehood again. By analyzing the pros and cons of this model concerning the two models of governance, the research is aimed at providing insights for the future administrative growth of the region. Through this holistic approach, the study seeks to provide a balanced view of the progress achieved thus far, while at the same time bringing to the forefront that which needs to be taken into serious consideration in order to guarantee inclusive and sustainable growth for Jammu and

Kashmir.

## LITERATURE REVIEW:

The updated Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act of 2019 holds great significance as a key document in the Indian constitution. It provides detailed information on Article 370, covering its clauses such as (1) (a), (1) (b), (1) (c), (1) (d), (2), and (3). This act serves as a valuable resource for understanding the current ground reality in Jammu and Kashmir, including Ladakh.

**In Dr. Tehseen Nisar's research,** the focus is on the complex issues surrounding Kashmir, particularly the abrogation of Article 370. The author examines the potential for peace or continued stalemate between India and Pakistan in light of this development. The research emphasises the significant impact of the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35a, highlighting their implications for Kashmir's special status, separate constitution, and its merger with the union territory. The author thoroughly explores Article 370 and its future effects on both

domestic relations within Jammu and Kashmir and international relations involving Pakistan, the UN, and the USA.

1. **Alan Kronstadt's research** publication centers on Kashmir, providing its historical background, recent developments, and U.S. policy as documented by the Congressional Research Service. The author highlights the actions taken by the Indian government, utilising its constitutional powers to implement changes in Jammu and Kashmir, where a Muslim majority exists. The author draws attention to Article 370, which granted Jammu and Kashmir

a "special status" and led to the state's bifurcation into "union territories." This constitutional change invoked the use of President's rule, which has raised concerns about potential consequences such as peace or conflict, religious stability, Indian military actions, interference from Pakistan, and the impact on national and international relations involving the UN, USA, India, Pakistan, and other countries. While the UN officially considers Jammu and Kashmir a disputed territory, India regards the recent constitutional changes as an "internal matter." The USA has supported efforts from both India and Pakistan to foster peace and development since 2019, including President Trump's mediation offer in July.

**In Arundhati Roy, Pankaj Mishra, Hilal Bhatt, Tariq Ali, Angana P. Chatterji, 2011 , (Kashmir: The Case for Freedom)** critically analyzes Kashmir's politico-historical challenges and challenges India's right to rule Kashmir. The book calls attention to militarization, human rights issues, and political turmoil and proposes that economic growth cannot solve Kashmir's underlying socio-political issues. Arundhati Roy and Tariq Ali stress the failure of Article 370, proposing that it never satisfied the aspirations of Kashmiris. While written prior to the 2019 abrogation, the book

offers important insights into Kashmir's historical resistance, governance issues, and possible implications of changing its constitutional status. This review serves to situate the discussion on whether development and integration attempts after Article 370 can be achieved without addressing regional identity and political ambitions.

**In the research work by Surbhi Gupta and Shashi Bhushan,** the authors shed light on the issue of the "special status" and conduct a thorough study, specifically focusing on the legal dimensions and implications of Article 370. The research explores the complexitiesurrounding Article 370, raising pertinent research questions and providing a comprehensive analysis of various perspectives.

# Research Questions:

* 1. 1. How has the abrogation of Article 370 affected governance and administration in Jammu and Kashmir?
	2. What are the major economic and infrastructural changes in J&K after abrogation?
	3. How have employment opportunities and welfare schemes changed in J&K since the removal of Article 370?
	4. Should J&K be a Union Territory or reconstituted as a state?

# Limitations

This research faces certain limitations that may affect the depth and scope of its analysis. One significant constraint is the limited availability of unbiased data from ground-level stakeholders, such as local residents, entrepreneurs, and officials, which can lead to potential gaps in understanding the real-time impact of the developments. The region’s dynamic socio-political environment further complicates data collection, as differing perspectives may influence the reliability of available information.

Another key limitation is the challenge in assessing long-term impacts, as the developments following the abrogation of Article 370 are relatively recent. While short-term effects, such as policy implementations and immediate infrastructural progress, can be evaluated, the broader implications on governance, economic stability, and societal transformation may take years to fully materialize. These limitations highlight the need for cautious interpretation of findings and suggest that further research over an extended period will be necessary to gain a comprehensive understanding of the region’s trajectory post-abrogation.

# INTRODUCTION

Jammu and Kashmir, formerly a state and now a union territory of India since October 31, 2019, is situated in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent. It encompasses the plains of Jammu in the south and the Vale of Kashmir in the north. The region of Jammu and Kashmir

is part of the larger disputed territory of Kashmir, which has been a subject of contention between India, Pakistan, and China since the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. In August

2019, legislation was passed to downgrade Jammu and Kashmir from statehood to union territory status. Additionally, the Ladakh region was separated and designated as a distinct union territory. These changes came into effect on October 31, 2019, while various court cases regarding the territory's status remained pending in the subsequent years.

Geographically, Jammu and Kashmir is bordered by the Indian union territory of Ladakh to the east, the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab to the south, Pakistan to the southwest, and the Pakistani-administered portion of Kashmir to the northwest. The administrative capitals are Srinagar during the summer and Jammu during the winter.

Notably, Jammu and Kashmir served as a princely state during the British East India Company and British Raj rule from 1846 to 1947. It was formed following the conclusion of the First Anglo- Sikh War. During the Partition of India and its subsequent political integration, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, Hari Singh, initially delayed making a decision on whether to integrate with India. However, on October 26, 1947, he acceded to India by signing the Instrument of Accession, seeking military aid during the Indo-Pakistan War of 1947-48. This marked the inclusion of Jammu and Kashmir into India. As part of this integration, Article 370 was incorporated into the Constitution, granting Jammu and Kashmir special status, a separate constitution, a state flag, and autonomy over its internal administration.

A significant turning point in the history of Jammu and Kashmir occurred on August 6, 2019, when the Government of India removed Article 370, thereby revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. This action was accompanied by the passing of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, which led to the creation of two Union Territories: Jammu and Kashmir

In the west and Ladakh in the east. Currently, there are three administrative divisions: Jammu Division, Kashmir Division, and Ladakh.

According to the latest census conducted in 2011, the population of Jammu is approximately 504,000, while the population of the Kashmir Valley is approximately 6.91 million

# The methodology

In my study on the overall development of Jammu and Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A, I adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods to gather information. I utilized telephony and video conferencing to connect with respondents as

well as face to face interviews with few from the Kashmir Valley. For the Jammu region, I conducted face-to-face interviews with randomly selected participants. By employing both primary and secondary sources of information, I aimed to provide an analytical overview of the research, incorporating diverse perspectives**.**

# HOW 370 CAME TO EXISTENCE

According to legend, Kashmir is said to have been reclaimed by the legendary rishi Kashyap from a large lake, and the land was initially referred to as Kashyapmar, which eventually evolved into Kashmir.

In ancient times, the Maurya emperor Ashoka played a significant role in Kashmir's history. He founded the city of Srinagar and introduced Buddhism to the region. Over the centuries, various ruling dynasties governed Kashmir until the 14th century when a Tibetan Buddhist refugee named Rinchana established the first Muslim dynasty. Later, when Akbar became the

Mughal emperor, he incorporated Kashmir into the Mughal Empire. During the early 19th century, Ranjit Singh, who formed a Sikh confederation, annexed Kashmir from the Mughal Empire. The administration of Jammu and Kashmir was entrusted to a local chieftain from the Dogra community, who expanded its territories by capturing Ladakh and Baltistan for the Sikh empire. Meanwhile, the British East India Company was gaining power in India. After challenging the Sikh empire, the British forced Ranjit Singh to sign the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809, which was formalized in 1846 after the first Anglo-Sikh war. This treaty determined the fate of Jammu

and Kashmir.

In a controversial move, the British "sold" the dominion of Jammu and Kashmir to Dogra king Gulab Singh for a sum of Rs 75 lakh. Gulab Singh ruled over Jammu, the Kashmir Valley, Gilgit- Baltistan, and Ladakh. This arrangement continued until 1947 when the British partitioned the Indian subcontinent, leading to the creation of India and Pakistan.

Jammu and Kashmir ruler Hari Singh initially pursued an independent path without acceding to either India or Pakistan. The state signed a standstill treaty with Pakistan, which was

breached when Pakistan invaded Jammu and Kashmir in October 1947. India intervened only after Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession, seeking assistance from New Delhi. Hari Singh sought special privileges for his people, similar to a 1927 law that restricted property ownership in Jammu and Kashmir to inheritance, aiming to keep outsiders, including the British, from acquiring land in the region.The Jawaharlal Nehru government accepted Hari Singh's condition, with the understanding that a final settlement would be determined in the future. The matter was presented to the Constituent Assembly of India, responsible for framing the Constitution, where after extensive deliberation, Article 370 was included in the Constitution as a "Temporary, Transitional and Special Provision."

Article 370 granted Jammu and Kashmir a special status, which was conferred through the 1954

Presidential Order. However, the Narendra Modi government recently revoked this special status through the 2019 Presidential Order.

Jammu and Kashmir, which has a rich historical account since ancient times, has now been divided into two Union Territories: Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian government announced on August 5, 2019, that Article 370 and 35A, which provided special status to Jammu and Kashmir, would be abrogated from the Indian Constitution. The Jammu region

predominantly speaks the Dogri language, identifying themselves as Dogra people, while the Kashmir Valley's majority speaks Kashmiri and identifies as Kashmiri people. These regions have distinct cultural backgrounds and traditions.

Considering the political instability over the past seven decades in both regions, the focus has been on the development of Jammu and Kashmir. Article 370 has been a significant point of discussion, examining its pros and cons.

# Benefits of removing Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir

*The removal of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir brings several benefits:*

1. Economic Boost: The region is expected to experience an economic upturn as businesses thrive without the restrictions imposed by Article 370.
2. Increased Investment: The removal of Article 370 opens up opportunities for increased investment in Jammu and Kashmir.
3. Job Creation: With increased business and investment, there is a likelihood of more job opportunities being generated in the region.
4. Positive Impact on GDP: The growth of production and business in Jammu and Kashmir will have a direct positive effect on the region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
5. Local Employment Opportunities: The removal of Article 370 enables the people of Jammu and Kashmir to find employment within their own state, reducing the need to seek employment opportunities elsewhere.
6. Boost in Tourism: Jammu and Kashmir's renowned tourism sector is expected to flourish even more as more people are likely to visit the region without the previous restrictions imposed by Article 370.
7. Improved Healthcare Facilities: With the removal of Article 370, there is a higher probability of an increase in the number of private hospitals and healthcare facilities in Jammu and

Kashmir, leading to improved medical services for the local population.

# Disadvantages of removing Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir

*Disadvantages of Removal of Article 370*

In addition to the perceived drawbacks, there are several other challenges associated with the removal of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir:

* 1. Impact on Local Businesses: The influx of businesses from other states after the removal of Article 370 may negatively affect businesses owned by the local population in Jammu and Kashmir.
	2. Rising Property Prices: The removal of Article 370 might lead to an increase in property prices, making it more challenging for local residents to afford properties in their own region.
	3. Employment and Environmental Concerns: As businesses expand and rely more on machinery, there is a potential risk of employment opportunities being affected, while increased industrialization may also have adverse effects on the environment.
	4. Cultural and Demographic Changes: With the removal of land ownership restrictions, there are concerns about changes in the demographic composition of Jammu and Kashmir, leading to fears of cultural dilution and loss of local identity.
	5. Political Unrest and Alienation: The decision to revoke Article 370 was met with resistance from certain sections of the population, leading to political unrest, protests, and a sense of alienation among some local communities.
	6. Security Challenges: Increased tensions and security concerns have persisted in the region, with heightened military presence and intermittent incidents of violence, which could impact long-term peace and stability.
	7. Uncertainty Over Statehood: The transition from a state to a Union Territory has led to uncertainty about the region’s future political status, with debates on whether statehood should be restored. This has caused dissatisfaction among some political groups and local leaders.
	8. Economic Uncertainty: While development initiatives have been introduced, the immediate economic impact has been mixed, with disruptions in trade, restrictions on communication post- abrogation, and delays in new investments taking full effect.

Despite these challenges, the long-term impact of the abrogation remains a subject of ongoing debate, with differing perspectives on its benefits and drawbacks.

# Development in J&K:

## COVID-19 Lockdown

Since the abrogation of Article 370, the business sector in Jammu and Kashmir has experienced a prolonged period of stagnation. The initial shutdown of Article 370 was followed by the COVID-19 lockdown, resulting in a nearly year-long standstill for businesses. Many government-dependent factories in the region were forced to close down, including approximately 200 factories that were

involved in the production of electrical goods. Despite the presence of numerous wooden factories in Jammu and Kashmir, there has been a concerning trend of importing wooden furniture from outside the region. Estimates suggest that around 40 million pieces of wooden furniture have been brought in from external sources over the past two years. This reliance on imports has had a detrimental effect on the local industries and has contributed to a decline in their growth and productivity. The government's emphasis on development in Jammu and Kashmir has not translated into visible progress on the ground.

Instead of witnessing growth, the region has experienced a decline in economic activity. The state government has not released the GDP figures for Jammu and Kashmir in the last three years, indicating a lack of significant economic advancement and tangible results.

The employment situation in the region has also been adversely affected. Although the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir expressed optimism about attracting investments and generating 7-8 lakh (700,000 to 800,000) jobs in the coming years, reports suggest that the private sector in Kashmir has witnessed job losses over the past two years. The government's efforts to provide employment opportunities have been insufficient to offset the overall decline in job availability.

In summary, the aftermath of Article 370's abrogation has resulted in a standstill in business activities in Jammu and Kashmir. Government-dependent factories have closed down, imports have impacted local industries, and the anticipated development has not materialized.

Moreover, job losses in the private sector and the absence of substantial economic growth have further compounded the challenges faced by the region.

## Opinions on the new land policy

During a conversation with a PhD research scholar from Pulwama district, I asked why there has been no influx of outsiders purchasing land and starting businesses in the Kashmir Valley in the previous years. The scholar's response shed light on the sentiment of Kashmiri Pandits,

stating that if anyone from outside were to come and settle in Kashmir, it would ideally be a Kashmiri Pandit. These individuals have a deep connection to the land and strong emotional ties. However, even the Kashmiri Pandits have not returned to live in the Valley and instead, peacefully reside in various cities across India. Given the extreme winter conditions where people have to stay indoors for six months, it becomes challenging to expect outsiders to come, purchase land, and establish a residence. The changes in Jammu and Kashmir are intended to bolster the economy and create employment opportunities in both regions. One crucial aspect of attracting investments is the availability of land and natural resources within a state.

## Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has become a significant concern in Jammu and Kashmir, and the region is now considered safe for tourists. Since the abrogation, there is heightened attention on Jammu and Kashmir. The local population is eager to generate income through activities like trekking, motor

biking, gondola rides, skiing, river rafting, and cultural tourism. The government emphasizes the utilization of renewable energy resources to meet the growing energy demands of the country. However, the local people also advocate for sustainable development that respects nature and its limits. They understand the importance of preserving natural resources and believe in the concept of renewable energy, which is widely accepted by the United Nations. Jammu and Kashmir, with its abundance of sunlight, wind, biomass, and rivers, holds great potential to meet the future energy requirements sustainably.

## The train from Jammu and Kashmir slowly returned to the track

After the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A, there has been a significant transformation in the atmosphere of Jammu and Kashmir. Although the region experienced a prolonged period of closure even after the removal of Article 370, the lives of local residents are gradually returning to normalcy. The Prime Minister held discussions with all stakeholders in Delhi to address the situation, and the Delimitation Commission has commenced its work in Jammu and Kashmir, paving the way for future elections based on their report. Jammu has great potential for investment in sectors such as food processing, handicrafts, handlooms, and horticulture.

Additionally, tourism remains a vital pillar of Jammu and Kashmir's economy, yet the sector has not attracted substantial investments. The real estate and healthcare sectors also suffer from inadequate investment in the region. To invite investments, the government is preparing to announce a new industrial and investment policy, along with the selection of over 6000 acres of land for the construction of an industrial park**.**

## Indications of Development

In the former state of Jammu and Kashmir, the rules regarding land lease for industries were complex, which hindered significant investments. However, the current scenario has changed, and the renowned apple and saffron produce of Jammu and Kashmir are ready to make their mark on the global stage. An investment report suggests that a Saudi Arabian group is prepared to invest 2500 crores in Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting the potential for growth in the region. The establishment of more cold stores and food processing units will contribute to real development. The silk industry, which boasts superior quality compared to China, has struggled in the past but now holds renewed promise. This brings hope to the local population, many of whom seek government jobs due to limited opportunities in the private sector and various restrictions. The region's specialty products, including Bhaderwahi Rajma and Jammu and Anantnag rice, have gained recognition for their distinctive aroma. Furthermore, Jammu and Kashmir possess a significant repository of Ayurvedic medicines, which remains largely untapped.

## Development of tourism

During my interactions with various individuals and exploring different areas, I discovered that

tourism holds a significant role in the state's economy, contributing to local employment opportunities. People emphasized the need to transition towards green tourism, reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources to preserve the environment, including glaciers, rivers, and air quality. The establishment of the Industrial Development Corporation is expected to accelerate investment activities, with dedicated zones being created for industrial development. Once the relevant laws are amended, prominent industrial entities from across the country have shown eagerness to invest in Jammu and Kashmir. The tourism sector remains a major economic strength, although adventure tourism is more prominent in neighboring states like Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. There have been discussions regarding investment possibilities in hydropower and solar energy, but progress has been limited. Despite the global recognition of Kashmir's handlooms and handicrafts, artisans are facing frustration due to the lack of advanced technology and better market access.

## Empowering Panchayats and Villages

The government has implemented adequate measures to prevent any kind of exploitation or misuse. Land will not be allocated arbitrarily, but will be specifically provided to those interested in establishing industries through the Industrial Park. Agricultural land will remain secure with the farmers. Separate land will be identified for industries, thereby promoting development through external investments. In order to ensure good governance and

accountability, laws have been strengthened for vulnerable sections, children, senior citizens, and effective administration. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, which strengthen grassroots democracy, have been fully implemented in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, empowering Panchayats and local bodies. This leads us to question the extent of change in the past few years and the level of ease in people's lives. The government is actively working towards women's empowerment, providing opportunities for the youth, and promoting the welfare of marginalized communities. Additionally, constitutional and basic rights of the people are being upheld, with the government making decisions for the betterment of the common people. Over the last two years, central laws have been implemented in both union territories to ensure that people benefit from them and accelerate the progress of the states.

## “Back to the Village” Scheme

To ensure the development of Jammu and Kashmir, it is crucial to gain the trust and confidence of the people. The Prime Minister's vision, as well as the efforts of the Lieutenant Governor,

have focused on this aspect. Initiatives such as "Mulakat" and "Back to Village" schemes have actively sought feedback from ordinary citizens, empowering the Panchayati Raj system. This approach has been highly effective. The historic election of the Block Development Council, with over 98 percent voter turnout, reflects the growing trust and participation of the people.

By strengthening democracy at the grassroots level, the government is providing new opportunities

for the aspirations of the people and reinforcing the rich heritage of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Women and children now enjoy rights that were previously restricted when they married outside the state. Rapid progress is also evident in infrastructure development, with hydropower being a notable example of significant acceleration in the past

two years.

## Delimitation Exercise

There are indications that the central government is preparing for assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. The process of delimitation is also underway in the Union Territory. The current maximum strength of the assembly is 107 seats, which will be increased to 114 seats after the completion of the delimitation exercise, as per the act passed by Parliament on August 6, 2019. It is important to note that 24 seats in the assembly remain vacant in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The delimitation process aims to ensure equal representation for all regions. This will bring about significant changes in the future. The central government is actively working towards providing employment opportunities for the youth in Jammu and Kashmir.

## New Policy for Government Employees

The government has introduced a new law to address involvement in anti-national activities, leading to consequences in passport services and government employment. The state government has issued an order stating that individuals engaged in stone pelting and other activities deemed anti-national will not receive clearance from security agencies during the scrutiny process for passport applications and government appointments. By examining local police records and utilizing digital resources, individuals found to be involved in such activities in Jammu and Kashmir will be ineligible for both passports and government jobs. Additionally, government employees with connections to terrorists will be placed on leave and the state administration is now taking steps to terminate the employment of any government worker involved in such associations.

## Unnecessary Expenditure has been reduced

The promotion of e-office is aimed at achieving a fully paperless governance system. As a significant step, the 150-year-old Durbar Move system in Jammu and Kashmir has been abolished. Previously, due to the presence of two capitals for six months each, the Durbar Move involved the transportation of goods via trucks, resulting in increased government expenditure. However, with the implementation of e-files and e-office, approximately Rs. 400 crore has been generated and substantial savings are expected.

## Policy on Reservations

The status of the reserved category in Jammu and Kashmir now aligns with the rest of the country. Previously, due to the provisions of Article 370, the implementation of reservation benefits was

not possible in the region. However, after the abrogation of Article 370, significant

changes have been witnessed. The government of Jammu and Kashmir has taken steps to ensure the socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) communities. The introduction of three-tier panchayat systems has allowed for reservation based on population in all civic elections, providing representation at the grassroots level. Additionally, the 1989 Prevention of Castes Atrocity Act, applicable to SC/ST communities, has been implemented in Jammu and Kashmir. A nomadic survey has been conducted for the first time, and discussions are underway regarding reservation in job opportunities for SC/ST individuals.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act 2004 and Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Rules 2005 provide for reservation in 8 percent of jobs for SC and 10 percent for ST individuals. These measures signify a new era of hope and progress for the reserved category in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Political Stability

Political instability has been a recurring challenge in Jammu and Kashmir, often resulting in diminished public confidence in their representatives due to political differences. The region is characterized by a majority Muslim population in the Kashmir valley and a majority Hindu population in the Jammu region. Elections, particularly at the grassroots level in Panchayati Raj Institutions, generate significant interest in both regions. The government is making efforts to restore normalcy ahead of the upcoming assembly elections. The outcomes of elections for Presidents of Block Development Councils and District Development Councils in various districts provide insights into the prevailing tensions following the abrogation of Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir. These elections serve as a critical test for the current security situation. Block Development Council elections have been conducted in 310 out of 316 blocks, with 172 seats reserved for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and women out of a total of 316 seats.

# The Government has taken several initiatives for the development of Jammu & Kashmir, some of which are: -

1. Accelerated progress has been made on projects under the Prime Minister's Development Package-2015, with 29 projects completed and the remaining projects at an advanced stage of progress.
2. - A new Central Sector Scheme has been implemented for the Industrial Development of Jammu & Kashmir, with investment applications worth over Rs. 54,000 crore received and industrial land allotted for projects worth over Rs. 36,000 crore.
3. - Under the languishing projects program, 1193 projects worth Rs. 1984 crores have been completed, including long-pending projects.
4. - Jammu & Kashmir has been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) under the Swachh Bharat

Mission.

1. - 100% saturation has been achieved in 17 individual beneficiary-centric schemes, including Saubhagya, Ujala, Ujjwala, and Indradhanush schemes.
2. - Significant progress has been made in the construction of roads under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, with 17,601 km of road completed and the connection of

2074 places. New tunnels, such as the Banihal tunnel and Chenani Nashri Tunnel, have been completed.

1. - Rail connectivity has been established with the commissioning of the Udhampur- Katra, Banihal-Quazigund, and Quazigund-Baramulla sections.
2. - The establishment of 02 new AIIMS, 07 new medical colleges, 02 State cancer institutes, and 15 nursing colleges has been undertaken, increasing the intake capacity by 854 seats.
3. - The number of government degree colleges/engineering colleges has increased from 96 to 147.
4. - Revival of power projects with a capacity of about 3000 MW has been initiated.
5. - International flights from Srinagar to Sharjah have commenced, along with the introduction of night flights from Jammu and Srinagar.
6. - The scope of the High-Density Plantation Scheme for Apple has been expanded to include other fruits, and Kashmiri Saffron has been given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
7. - Significant progress has been made under the Jal Jeevan Mission, with increased household tap water connections and the designation of two districts as Har Ghar Jal districts.

2014. - Major irrigation projects, including the Main Ravi canal, Tral lift irrigation scheme, and Comprehensive Flood Management Plan of River Jhelum & its Tributaries–Phase– I, have been completed.

1. - Recruitment in the public sector and self-employment schemes has led to significant employment opportunities.
2. - Proactive operations against terrorists, identification and arrest of overground workers, action against banned/supporters organizations, increased security measures,

and legal actions against terror funding have been undertaken to protect citizens.

# Case Studies

*Case Study 1: Rejuvenation of Tourism in Jammu & Kashmir*

**Background**

Tourism has remained a significant pillar of the economy of Jammu and Kashmir. Political instability, security issues, and frequent shutdowns, however, had resulted in the reduction of tourist arrivals.

Post-abrogation of Article 370, various measures were implemented to rejuvenate and develop the tourism industry with a view to generating employment and increasing economic growth.

**Government Initiatives**

1. Infrastructure Development: Enhanced road connectivity, upgraded hotels, and the development of off-beat destinations such as Bangus Valley, Gurez, and Dodhpathri.
2. Winter Tourism & Adventure Sports: Ski resort development in Gulmarg, night skiing, and new trekking trails to lure adventure tourists.
3. Film Tourism: Roll-out of the J&K Film Policy 2021, providing incentives for Bollywood and foreign filmmakers to film in Kashmir.
4. Religious and Cultural Tourism: Revival of places of pilgrimage like Vaishno Devi, Amarnath Cave, and Shankaracharya Temple.

**Impact**

* + In 2022 and 2023, J&K registered its biggest-ever tourist arrival, surpassing 2 crore visitors.
	+ Tourism activity generated employment opportunities, boosting the livelihoods of hoteliers, transporters, and local artisans.
	+ Revival of tourism helped the region's GDP immensely, becoming a major driver of economic revival.

*Case Study 2: Industrial Investment and Employment Generation*

**Background**

Prior to Article 370 abolition, private investments in J&K were low owing to political instability and restrictions on land use. Abrogation facilitated industries from all over India to make investments in the state, thereby promoting industrial estates and job centres.

**Major Milestones**

1. J&K Industrial Policy 2021: Provided private investment incentives in the form of tax relaxation, subsidies, and land assignment.
2. Investment Proposals: More than ₹1.5 lakh crore worth of investments in the industrial sector were received, and this resulted in the setting up of manufacturing, IT, and logistics industries.
3. Employment Schemes: The government-sponsored schemes of Mission Youth, Skill India, and Startup India provided training and funding to youths who became entrepreneurs.

**Impact**

* + Generation of thousands of direct and indirect employment opportunities in IT, healthcare, and manufacturing industries.
	+ Increased local entrepreneurship, with many startups being formed under the Startup India program.
	+ Higher per capita income and overall economic growth, less dependent on government employment.

These case studies reflect how tourism rejuvenation and industrial investments have transformed J&K's economic scenario after Article 370, and also suggest areas of improvement.

# Recent Election

In October 2024, Jammu and Kashmir held its first Legislative Assembly elections after the revocation of Article 370 in 2019. The elections were spread over three phases from September 18 to October 1, and results were declared on October 8. The turnout of voters was impressive at 64%, indicating massive public participation.

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) was the dominant party, claiming 42 of the 90 seats, mostly in the Kashmir Valley. Their coalition partner, the Indian National Congress (INC), took 6 seats, making the total for the coalition 48 seats, thereby securing a majority. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) got 29 seats, mostly from Hindu-dominant Jammu province. Other than the ruling BJP, the Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party (JKPDP), Jammu & Kashmir People's Conference (JPC), Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), and Independents, filled up the rest of the seats.

Omar Abdullah, the JKNC leader, is likely to be the Chief Minister. He has been stressing the importance of restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, which was changed during the 2019 reorganization.

Despite the successful conduct of elections and the formation of a local government, the region continues to be administered as a Union Territory under the direct control of New Delhi. The newly elected assembly possesses limited powers compared to the autonomy enjoyed prior to 2019.

These election results are broadly seen as a vote against the central government's 2019 move to abrogate Jammu and Kashmir's special status. The JKNC-INC coalition's victory suggests a large number of the electorate's aspiration for more regional autonomy and a return to the earlier status of the region.

# Shall J&K be Union Territory or Statehood shall be restored

The controversy surrounding whether Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) should be kept as a Union Territory (UT) or have its statehood reinstated is complex, encompassing political, administrative, and socio-cultural aspects.

Reasons for Reinstating Statehood:

* + Enhanced Local Governance: Reinstating statehood would provide J&K more legislative and executive powers, allowing local leaders to solve region-specific problems more efficiently. The existing UT status concentrates power, which, according to some, undermines effective governance.
	+ Respecting Regional Identity: J&K possesses a distinct political and cultural heritage. Statehood is regarded by most as an acknowledgment of this unique identity, bringing with it a sense of dignity and self-respect among citizens.
	+ Political Consensus: Political leaders from different parties in J&K have collectively demanded the restoration of statehood. This joint approach reflects the prevalent regional desire for greater self- governance.

Arguments for Retaining Union Territory Status:

* + Central Oversight for Security: Proponents of UT status argue that direct central administration allows for more streamlined decision-making, particularly concerning security and counter-terrorism efforts in the region.
	+ Uniform Development Initiatives: As a UT, J&K can benefit from centrally sponsored schemes and projects, potentially leading to more uniform infrastructure development and economic growth.

Recent Developments:

In October 2024, the first Legislative Assembly elections were held in J&K after Article 370 had been abrogated in 2019. The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) gained the most number of seats as the top political party, with its president Omar Abdullah becoming Chief Minister. As much as there was the setup of a local government, J&K was still governed like a UT in order to minimize the powers that the new administration would have.

In November 2024, the J&K legislature approved a non-binding resolution calling on the central government to revive the state's semi-autonomous status. But the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which commands a large majority of seats, was against it, echoing the continuing political rift on the issue.

The choice to grant statehood to J&K is a balancing act between national security concerns and the democratic desires of its people. While central control seeks to promote stability and homogenous development, most local politicians and citizens support statehood as a way to attain true self-rule and maintain the region's distinct identity. A balanced approach, taking into account both security needs and the democratic will of the people, is necessary in deciding the future status of Jammu and Kashmir.

## Findings

The research has examined the effect of the revocation of Article 370 on Jammu and Kashmir, specifically on governance, socio-economic growth, employment, tourism, elections, and statehood. The findings are as

follows:

1. Governance and Administrative Reforms:
	* Abrogation of Article 370 has resulted in the complete extension of central laws to Jammu and Kashmir, simplifying the governance and enhancing policy implementation.
	* Panchayati Raj institutions have been institutionalized, allowing for grassroots democracy and local governance.
	* Centralizing power through the transition to Union Territory (UT) status has restricted the powers of elected members.
2. Economic and Infrastructural Development:
	* More private and government investments have hastened infrastructure development, such as road connectivity, industrial parks, and tourism spots.
	* Land ownership being opened to non-residents has increased property values, aiding investors but also provoking concern from residents about affordability and population changes.
3. Employment and Welfare Schemes:
	* Government schemes such as Mission Youth, Ayushman Bharat, and PM Awas Yojana have enhanced healthcare, housing, and job opportunities.
	* Job opportunities were created through industrial growth, but the local employment preference and skill shortages are still issues.
4. Revival of the Tourism Sector:
	* The tourism sector has seen a revival with new destinations being marketed and issues related to safety being taken care of.
	* Efforts by the Government in promoting winter sports, heritage tourism, and eco-tourism have given an impetus to economic growth.
5. Political Developments and Elections:
	* The 2024 Assembly Elections witnessed high voter turnout, reflecting increased political participation among the populace.
	* Although a local government has been voted in, its authority is still restricted under UT status, with ongoing calls for restoration of statehood.
6. Public Sentiment and Statehood Debate:
	* There is widespread demand for the restoration of statehood, as most political leaders and citizens feel it will grant more autonomy and representation.
	* The central government has insisted that statehood would be reinstated at an "appropriate time," leaving the debate afloat.

# Conclusion

The revocation of Article 370 in August 2019 was a historic turning point in the administration and governance of Jammu and Kashmir, precipitating sweeping changes to its political, economic, and social reality. This study has analyzed these changes, weighing the achievements and setbacks that have arisen since the abrogation. One of the most significant results has been the application of central

laws in the area, facilitating streamlined administration and enhanced policy implementation. Infrastructure growth has picked up pace, with better road networks, industrial growth, and tourism development. Government schemes like Ayushman Bharat, Mission Youth, and PM Awas Yojana have been instrumental in enhancing healthcare, housing, and employment.

Yet, the shift to a Union Territory (UT) has also caused apprehensions. While there is greater centralization of governance, it has curtailed the powers of locally elected members, leading to demands for the re-establishment of statehood. The 2024 Assembly Elections saw a good turnout of voters, reflecting a renewed political participation, but the area remains administered under UT status with limited legislative powers.

Even with further investments and economic reforms, such issues as skyrocketing property costs, job woes, and concerns over cultural identity continue to represent central points of contention. Along with security worries and political upheaval, concerns over the area's stability, a delicate balancing act between local aspirations and development, is essential.

Overall, although the abrogation of Article 370 has opened up new avenues for development and governance, the success of these reforms in the long run will be contingent upon how well development policies, political representation, and regional stability are handled. The issue of statehood continues to be at the heart of the future of Jammu and Kashmir, and hence it is important that the government addresses local issues while providing sustainable growth and peace in the region.