

## Article 370

---

**(Chin Hills, British Burma – 14:00 | February 16, 1944)**

“*INA!*” Mohan’s eyes lit up. Finally.

He heard his breath echoing, nervousness catching up to him. Each inhale made the arid terrain feel more real.

“Join your brothers!” echoed a voice from across the jungle ravine. “Turn your guns on your colonial masters!”

The sound cut through the chaos of the battlefield, piercing Mohan’s ears.

It was the call he had long waited for. The call he had bled for, fought for.

Rifle in hand, Mohan surged forward—firing without pause, without hesitation.

He struggled to walk in the muddy terrain, boots sinking into the red-stained earth like glue. With each shot, a flicker of hope lit up his eyes.

“You’re gonna get yourself killed, Mohan! Don’t do it!” someone shouted from behind.

The voice whispered in his ear, muffled by the gunfire and Mohan’s brain.

He didn’t turn back. He couldn’t.

The INA battalion waited beyond the ridge. This had been his plan all along — to break the British lines and join the army of Indian liberation.

His legs froze. His heart pounded.

Sweat dripping from his trembling body - every inch felt like a victory.

The humidity added to the sweat.

The choking stench of gunpowder burned his nose, making it harder to breathe.

Then, in one swift motion, he pulled a grenade from his belt.

The sweaty metal scraped his bare skin as he pulled the pin with his trembling fingers and hurled it into the enemy trench.

Gunfire cracked like thunder around him.

Mohan turned and sprinted back toward his trench — but a storm of bullets tore through the air.

He suddenly felt a blinding pain in his back, his spine. As if his spine were being cut.

Blood gushed out of the wounds, flowing like water

Then, a sharp burst tore through his thigh.

He felt the bullets rip through the muscle and the flesh.

Blood flowed on every inch of skin, finally meeting in between.

His clothes were soaked in blood.

His once khaki uniform now bled red - perhaps its truest colours.

He couldn't walk. He felt his eyes fading, his body collapsing into the damp mud, breath shallow.



**(Lok Sabha, New Delhi – 11:00 | August 5, 2019)**

"We will give our lives for Kashmir!" Home Minister Amrit Sharma's voice thundered through the chamber, echoing like musical drums off the dusty old sandstone walls.

Benches trembled as the opposition waved sweaty, ink-stained papers pulled out of their pockets.

The screech of moving chairs swelled as MPs stood up, their bodies tensing with anger, gripping the bill with clenched fists and raised voices.

Desks thumped like boots marching in a parade.

Their voices rose like a volley of artillery rounds.

The Speaker's gavel pounded again and again like a pulse gone wild.

Each strike sent a jolt through the Speaker's table.

Yet it barely thundered over the cries and shouts of MPs.

Jaws clenched. Eyes locked across the aisle like soldiers before a charge.

The weight of people and history pressing down on the chamber, air itself holding its breath.

Sweat clung to necks and foreheads despite the crisp, sweet chill of autumn air.



**(Prime Minister's Office, Islamabad – 11:05 | August 5, 2019)**

The Principal Secretary entered with urgency, his footsteps thudding against the dazzling tiled floor.

"Sir, it's confirmed—India is abrogating Article 370."

Ikhlaq Khalid's grip tightened around the cold metal nib of his fountain pen as he looked up from his desk, his expression unreadable.

His Principal Secretary stood before him, jaw clenched, body rigid.

"What?" The word came out as a whisper. Sitting up straight, the words came out more forcefully: "Are you certain?"

"Yes, sir. Reports suggested a military buildup... but this... this is beyond our expectation."

The folder in his hand creased audibly with the tightening grip.

A tense pause. The tick of the clock sounded longer and louder than usual.

Ikhlaq exhaled slowly out of his lips, setting down his pen with a soft click on the stone tabletop.

"Call GHQ. Call an emergency National Security Council meeting. Immediately."

"Sir, diplomatic channels—"

"Forget diplomacy!" Ikhlaq snapped. He turned to his defence officials. "Put the Air Force on high alert. Deploy frontline squadrons to forward positions. If India moves troops into the Valley, we respond—decisively."

Ikhlaq intensely scribbled something on his notepad.

The harsh scratching of paper, the only sound in the room.

A heavy silence fell over the room. They all knew what was at stake.

The air turned thick as if preparing itself for the upcoming storm.



**(Calcutta, British India – 11:00 | 20 February, 1944)**

The dry winter wind cracked not only the corpse's skin but that of the mourners too.

Mohan's coffin arrived home, carried on rigid shoulders and eyes that refused to weep.

Amma and Nila stood paralyzed with grief.

Amma sat unmoving, body shaking, face trembling. Nila's fists clenched as the fire in her eyes grew.

"My Mohan! First Madhav... now Mohan!" Amma cried out.

Every syllable cracked her voice, a cry in itself.

"They used him, Amma! He fought for them, and this is how they repay us!" Nila's voice rose sharply with rage.

Crowds gathered for Mohan's funeral procession.

A sea of murmurs buzzed like swarming bees.

They lit torches. They chanted. Flames flickered.

Some wept. Others shouted, raising their fists into the dry February sky.

"Mohan Zindabad! Angrez Murdabad! Hamare dil mein sirf Mohan hai!"

Long Live Mohan! Down with the British! Our hearts belong to Mohan!



**(Prime Minister's Office, New Delhi – 11:15 | August 5, 2019)**

The Principal Secretary stormed in, his face ashen.

"Prime Minister, Pakistan has launched airstrikes on our airfields – Jets, Bombers – it's happening now! We're under attack!"

The Prime Minister straightened, his chair creaking behind him. "Where?"

"Srinagar, Ambala, Bikaner, Uttarlai, Jamnagar, and Gwalior. They've targeted our airfields."

For a moment, there was no reaction. Then, the Prime Minister leaned back, his expression controlled. "Who else knows?"

"Top military officials. It hasn't leaked yet."

"Keep it that way."

The air in the room became denser. "Sir?"

"If word spreads now, we risk panic, market collapse, and political deadlock. 370 must be revoked without disruption." His tone was firm, calculated. "We respond—but we do it on our terms. Get me the Air Force Chief. I want a full assessment and a counterstrike plan within the hour."

The Principal Secretary, Ranjan Roy, nodded and left.

The room was hung heavy like drapes of uncertainty. Outside, unknown enemies were planning to bleed the country – India was at war!



**(Indian Forward Post, Kargil – 12:00 | August 5, 2019)**

A cold, icy wind blew across the valley, rustling hung uniforms and biting the skin.

An Indian Army Captain looked at the ridges through his binoculars.

"Stay alert," he ordered. "Pakistan has attacked our airbases. We may be next."

"Yes, sir!" his soldiers responded.

Then—gunfire.

Silence and stillness collapsed – the noise of the gunfire cracked from the ridge.

Loud explosions burst on the ground, unearthing the soil.

Three men collapsed instantly – with loud thuds and cries. The others dropped, crawling back to defensive positions.

Crackling of gunfire wasn't stopping for even a minute.

"They've flanked us!" a soldier shouted.

The captain ducked behind the sandbag, quickly grabbing the radio. "This is 'Bat.' We are surrounded—requesting immediate artillery support!"

At first, the radio whispered. But then grew louder: "Copy. ETA—10 seconds."



**(Lok Sabha, New Delhi – 12:10 | August 5, 2019)**

"The voting begins now", the Speaker announced.

Before the process could start, the room descended into uproar and waved papers like flags.

Papers flew around the chamber like planes around a raging storm.

Some shouting into cameras.

Opposition MPs showed news reports. "Pakistan has attacked our airbases and forward posts! Why is the government silent?"

Cameras flickered to capture every moment, every second, eager to capture everything.

The speaker banged his gavel again and again, struggling to restore order, drowning under the voices. "Please remain seated!"

MPs demanded answers.

The Speaker, his face discomposed, finally declared a recess.



**(Central Hall, New Delhi – 12:45 | August 5, 2019)**

Inside a private chamber, the Prime Minister faced a group of restless MPs under buzzing tube lights.

Making sure he was prim and proper.

"What's happening at the borders? Are we at war?" one MP demanded.

His face trembled—not with fear, but curiosity overtaking tension.

"Why is the government silent?" another pressed.

His body was rigid, face hungry for answers.

The Prime Minister firmly raised a hand. The room was silent at once.

"This is a time for composure," he said firmly. "There is no war. Our forces are in control."

His face was calm, not even a crease.

"But sir, multiple sources—"

"Do not fall for rumours", the PM interrupted. "Focus on the task at hand."

His body relaxed.

A long silence stretched.



**(Lok Sabha, New Delhi – 13:00 | August 5, 2019)**

The Speaker resumed the session, his face calm.

His voice sharp as a knife.

"You press the green button if you agree, yellow if you abstain, red if you reject."

The voting commenced.

Moments later, the results were displayed on the big screen.

"The Ayes have it. The Lok Sabha passes the bill!" the Speaker announced.

The opposition sat in disarray.

Their once bright expressions had dimmed—now as dark as a new moon night.

The ruling party's MPs face calm, but determined, for the challenges that lie ahead.

But the next challenge lay ahead—Rajya Sabha was next.

Outside, as Parliament edged closer to reshaping history, jets roared – India edged closer to war.



**(Indian Forward Post, Kargil – 13:00 | August 5, 2019)**

Machine gun blared as bullets ricocheted off the rocks, forcing the Indian soldiers to stay low, below the sandbags.

"Bhai, why does war happen?" A young soldier asked, his voice soft and drowned out by the chaos.

The Indian Captain kept his eyes on the battlefield. "Don't know," he muttered.

Nothing – just silence, wind, and the stench of gunpowder.

"Oye, where's the artillery? It's been ten minutes!" another soldier shouted, desperation creeping into his voice.

The captain grabbed his radio. "Reinforcements?"

"Sent long back, should be arriv—" the voice cut off. The captain was frustrated. Jaw clenched.

The Pakistanis were trapped. They had been fighting for forty-five minutes—exhausted, low on ammunition, and now flanked from behind by Indian reinforcements. The tide had turned against them.

But then, the captain realized something—they were running low on ammunition too.

(What the Indians didn't know—the Pakistanis were in the same situation.)

If this dragged on, they could be overrun. They needed a plan.

The captain thought quickly. Wait them out. They must be close to running out of ammunition as well.

With eyes locked on one another, the Indian soldiers held their fire—each round, a heartbeat spared. Minutes passed. Then—silence. The Pakistanis had stopped shooting.

From the other side of the hill—gunfire. A fresh volley of reinforcements had arrived!

The second Indian Army unit had arrived!

Within moments, the remaining Pakistani soldiers were either captured or eliminated.

The Kargil Forward Post had been defended!



**(Congress Meeting, New Delhi – 13:30 | August 5, 2019)**

*(Video Conference)*

Tubelights flickered. The ceiling fans whirred so loudly, they drowned out the voices.

“They managed to pass the bill in the Lok Sabha,” a senior Congressman said, shaking his head, before rubbing his forehead to wipe out the sweat, despite the cooler. “But Rajya Sabha is still left.”

A regional leader scoffed with a smirk. “They bulldozed it through with their brute majority. But here? They don’t have the numbers.”

“Abrogating Article 370 is unconstitutional,” another MP added, tapping the table for emphasis. His watch tapped the glass with a sharp ting.

Everyone lowered their computer’s voice.

They were utterly disturbed.

“It’s an outright betrayal of the Kashmiri people,” a third voice echoed.

The Leader of the Opposition finally spoke. His voice was low but firm. “Their strength was in the Lok Sabha, not here. They need a two-thirds majority to push this through the Rajya Sabha. They don’t have it.”

An agreement spread over the call.

“We can stall it,” a strategist suggested, as he leaned in, emphasising every word. His voice dropped to a low, sinister murmur, like a movie villain. “Demand a Select Committee review, challenge the legality, raise procedural objections—”

The leader raised a hand, silencing everyone. He looked around. Then, he spoke again, his tone decisive.

“We don’t let it pass.”

A knowing silence filled the call, broken only by the buzzing of a printer.

The trap was set.



**(Rajya Sabha, New Delhi – 14:00 | August 5, 2019)**

A buzz of murmurs filled the Sabha. The creaking sound of leather chairs pricked everyone’s ears.

Some scribbling on papers, highlighting the ‘flaws’ of the bill.

The sound of broadcasting cameras starting only delayed things in the Rajya Sabha.

As all was set, the Chairperson leaned in to adjust his microphone, before tapping it, producing a loud thudding sound, almost making the MPs deaf.

“Please present the bill, Amrit Ji,” the Chairperson requested.

Amrit Sharma adjusted his glasses and stood. The bright overhead lights gleamed off his lens as he stood up. His modest carriage juxtaposed the tension around him.

“The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019, states: All parts of Article 370 will no longer be applicab—”

“In what constitutional world is this possible?” an opposition MP interrupted, his voice inaudible as he banged the table again and again to emphasise.

“The Constituent Assembly of Jammu & Kashmir had the sole power to remove it. How can we do it?”

Amrit Sharma remained unfazed. “Today’s notification has declared the Constituent Assembly to be the Legislative Assembly. Since the President’s Rule dissolves the Legislative Assembly, the Parliament of India assumes its powers. Therefore, we—”

“This is a betrayal of the Kashmiri people!” another MP shouted.

Gasps and mutters started all around the Sabha. Everyone was shocked as if a scam had been exposed.

BJP MPs responded without delay. “370 was a temporary provision! It was never meant to be permanent!”

Voices clashed.

The speaker pounded the gavel again and again, but the voices had risen out of control. Red-faced MPs rose, shouting, pointing, and drowning each other out.

This was a battlefield of words, no less fierce than the one beyond the border.

MPs clashed furiously, like warriors on a battlefield.



**(Eight Months Ago, Srinagar | November 21, 2018)**

Outside, the snowflakes drifted lazily off the roofs, clinging to windows, before sliding down like melted dreams.

What did the calm snowflakes know? They were the only ones at peace.

Inside, the heater battled the cold as PDP battled to form a coalition.

It was a ‘heated battle’ in Kashmir.

“BJP will be shocked,” Gulbadin Ali, a senior Congress leader, said with a smirk.

“Of course,” Owais Ahmad, leader of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC), agreed.

Seated at the table, Mehlooba Muqti, the former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, picked up the document. “Let me sign it,” she said, her voice steady.

As she picked up the cold pen, her fingers trembled. Her nervous, frostbitten hand trembled as it slid over the hard paper. The ink came out slowly, due to the cold.

Who would have thought that on a cold winter day in Jammu and Kashmir, such an alliance would take shape? Months ago, the idea would have seemed impossible. Yet, in hindsight, it was inevitable—the Bharatiya Jagriti Party (BJP) and the People's Development Party (PDP) had always been ideological opposites. Their partnership was doomed from the start. The BJP's withdrawal from the coalition was only a matter of time.

Mehlooba Muqti handed the signed letter to an aide. "Fax this to the Governor's office, now!"

"Yes, ma'am," the office aide nodded, before rushing out.

The soft sound of thuds on the shining marble echoed in the hallway.

Minutes passed. Then more.

A tense silence filled the room.

The aide kept trying to fax the document again and again, but every time the machine blinked red. It rattled, then stopped entirely.

The office aide returned, hesitant. "Ma'am... the fax machine isn't working."

A brief pause. Then, disbelief.

The heat of the situation made the room warmer. As a snowstorm brewed outside, a warmer storm brewed inside.

"What?" Mehlooba Muqti's brows furrowed.

"We've tried multiple times. The transmission won't go through."

It was an absurd, almost surreal situation. In a crucial political moment, the fate of an entire state government hinged on a malfunctioning fax machine.

Meanwhile, at Raj Bhavan, Governor Satyan Pal Mehra made his move. Without waiting for formal submissions, he dissolved the assembly that evening, citing instability and the threat of horse-trading.

With a single decision, the possibility of a new alliance collapsed. The Governor assumed full control of Jammu and Kashmir.

And just like that, democracy in the state was put on hold.



**(Rajya Sabha, New Delhi – 14:10 | August 5, 2019)**

"This is a conspiracy! It's an injustice to the Kashmiri people!"

For the first time that day, Rahil "Pappu" Gautam shot up from his seat, his voice echoing off the dome. His voice was sharp and sonorous, cutting through the noise. The Congress benches erupted in approval, thumping their desks, while the chamber held its breath, waiting for the explosion.

"You are snatching the identity of a crown! Stripping away its jewel! A crown with no power—just a hollow symbol!" Rahil's hands thumped the table, and a glass of water spilled as the table vibrated agonizingly.

His face was tense with anger.

BJP MPs shook their heads, some scoffing, others smirking.

"It's unconstitutional!" a Congress MP yelled, his voice barely cutting through the noise.

More cheers from Congress. Opposition MPs pounded their desks, jeering at the ruling party.

Across the aisle, a BJP MP stood, unfazed by the chaos. "We are unifying India. What Jayprakash Nehra and Shehzad Abdullah did—that was unconstitutional!"

The Congress side erupted in boos. Some MPs waved their hands dismissively, others leaned forward, shaking their heads.

Rahil snapped back. "The situation back then was different!" He turned toward the Chairperson, gesturing sharply. "War! Uncertainty! We had no choice but to agree with Abdullah! You would have done worse!"

BJP MPs burst into laughter. Some clapped mockingly; others leaned back smugly, arms folded like spectators enjoying a play.

"Article 35A discriminates against Indians in their own country!" another BJP MP shouted, standing up. "Why should an Indian from Gujarat be treated as a foreigner in Kashmir?"

Thunderous applause from the ruling benches. Some MPs nodded, murmuring in agreement.

Rahil leaned forward. "35A protected Kashmiris from outsiders! It gave them security!"

Congress MPs thumped their desks. Some shouted, 'Yes! Yes!'

Amrit Sharma, who had been listening silently, finally spoke. His voice was calm, controlled. "Security from whom?"

A pause. The hall went still. Even Congress MPs hesitated.

"From their countrymen?" Sharma's voice sliced through the tension.

BJP MPs burst into loud applause. Some laughed, shaking their heads.

Rahil clenched his fists. "We call Kashmir heaven. HEAVEN!" He turned to the ruling benches, his voice rising. "Look at this so-called heaven—no internet, people living in fear! We never did this!"

Amrit Sharma leaned forward, adjusting his glasses. His expression didn't change. "Let me remind you, Mr. Gautam—your grandmother, the late Prime Minister Indira Gautam, imposed the EMERGENCY. Don't talk about fear—you don't know what real fear is."

The chamber froze. Even Congress MPs exchanged nervous glances.

You could hear them uncomfortably murmuring, thinking to resist the argument; the uncomfortable shifting in seats; their faces tense, at the same time blank.

Then, in an instant, uproar.

"Don't change the topic!" a Congress MP roared.

Amrit Sharma remained calm, his gaze fixed on Rahil. "I'm not. You talk about constitutional values, but remember—Article 370 was a TEMPORARY provision. It was never meant to last 70 years. We are uniting our country."

Rahil slammed his hand on the desk. "We are the people's party! We never decided the fate of the people—we let them decide! But you? You play around with the Constitution like a jigsaw puzzle. Fit this piece here, shift that one there—boom, you win! NO!"

Congress MPs clapped wildly. The ruling side groaned, shaking their heads.

Rahil pointed across the aisle. "This is real life. Not a board game!"

A loud voice boomed from the BJP side: "A country can't have two flags, two constitutions, or two symbols!"

BJP MPs clapped. Some shouted, 'Jai Hind!'

Rahil didn't hesitate. "Hong Kong has its own laws, flag — even a border with China! Why not Kashmir?!"

A BJP MP scoffed, shaking his head. "Don't compare India to China. We're a democracy—they're a dictatorship. Worlds apart."

More voices. More chaos.

"ORDER! ORDER!" The Chairperson slammed the gavel down with a sharp thud. A mix of angry and shattered applause filled the Sabha. Everyone could hear the hurried footsteps across the hall.

The Chairperson finally rose above the voices and declared, "Session adjourned till the sixth day of August 2019."



**(Rajya Sabha, New Delhi – 11:00 | August 6, 2019)**

The air in the House felt charged, electric like a thunderstorm trapped inside.

Congress MPs rushed to the well of the house, waving placards like storm flags that read: "STOP THIS CONSTITUTIONAL FRAUD!"

It was their silent protest.

The Congress benches erupted in thunderous boos, resounded as feet pounded and placards flapped, desks rattling like battle drums, as Amrit Sharma walked in.

There was still no sign of the chairperson.

Each slam echoed like a slap across the airwaves, jarring millions glued to their screens.

Amrit Sharma appeared in his usual modest demeanor, his face set in resolve, jacket fluttering in the soft, calm hum of the A.C.

"We demand a Select Committee review!" Congress MPs shouted in unison.

"We shall vote on the bill!" an opposition MP pushed forward.

Rahil Gautam turned to his party members with a determined expression, then looked at the ruling side. He let out a dry laugh. "Also, today, the BJP is revoking 370. Who knows what's next?"

A BJP MP leaned forward, his tone calm and collected. "Yesterday, you mentioned 'people's consent.' So, Mr. Gautam, did the people consent to Article 370 at all, or was it just handed to them?"

A few murmurs from Congress. Some MPs glanced at each other.

Rahil's expression hardened, his fists clenched, his cheeks flushed, his jaw tightened.

"Revoking 370 strips Kashmir of its identity! This isn't integration—it's ANNEXATION!"

BJP MPs exploded in protest, slamming the table. Some MPs jumped up, pointing at Rahil, yelling in outrage.

"Annexation?! We are reclaiming what is ours!"

Rahil stood his ground. "This article was meant to protect Kashmir—WITH the Kashmiri people's assent! But today? You rule with brute force!"

A BJP MP hammered his desk. "And what about the assent of the Indian people? Are they not important?"

More shouting. More uproar.

"ORDER! ORDER!" The Chairperson's voice barely carried over the commotion as he pounded his gavel continuously.

MPs pointed across aisles, waving papers like weapons, voices crashing into each other in chaos.

The House was in complete disarray.

A break was declared.



**(Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad – 12:10 | August 6, 2019)**

Ikhlaq Khalid sat before the national emblem, his face solemn, eyes firm. The national flag behind him shone brightly in this historic transmission; it waved slightly from the warm air outside.

The room was silent but nervous.

The studio lights blazed on his face, turning every drop of sweat into a spotlight.

The lights dazzled his eyes, making it hard to focus.

A soft beep marked the start of the live broadcast — and Ikhlaq’s breath hitched.

Every television across Pakistan glowed with the nation’s leader, live on air.

“Good evening, my fellow Pakistanis,” he began, voice calm but heavy with resolve. “Tonight, I speak to you not only as your Prime Minister, but as a global citizen worried for the future of this sub-continent and our world.”

He paused for 15 seconds, allowing his words to settle before continuing.

He was nervous—his mind racing. Would this be a righteous decision, or a catastrophic one?

He continued, with weighted conviction.

“Our neighbour, India, has taken a dangerous and provocative step. They have stripped our Kashmiri brothers of their rights by abrogating Article 370 — a move that not only violates international norms, but changes the entire geopolitical balance of the region.”

He leaned forward slightly, intensity building, his eyebrows frowning. He was starting to feel the heat.

The fans weren’t on. The A/C was broken.

Sweat trickled down his neck. The heat fused with his nerves, coiling tight in his chest.

“And now, they are militarizing the Line of Control at an alarming rate. One must ask — is Gilgit-Baltistan next? Is Azad Kashmir their next target? We will not, and we cannot, allow that to happen.”

The stench of sweat and stale ink clung to the room, making each breath harder to take.

“Pakistan will not stay silent. We will respond — firmly, decisively, and with full force. Therefore, in defence of our sovereignty and in solidarity with the people of Kashmir, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan *hereby declares war* on the Republic of India.”

The transmission ended. The room stayed silent.

Ikhlaq slumped into the chair, his energy spent by heat, stress, and history’s burden.

The heat had got to him, but the tremor of his words continued to echo across the subcontinent.

His fiery declaration rippled across borders, igniting headlines and airwaves alike.