Folklore has it that the ancient prince Bharat played as a child with lions. He would even snatch the morsel from a lion’s mouth. What the Modi government has done is nothing short of this. It is indeed a very bold move which the timid-hearted in the opposition, possessed by the fear of terrorists’ backlash will not be able to appreciate.

The only point of objection that the opponents of the move, whether in Delhi or in Srinagar, have raised is the violation of procedure. The normal procedure, it may be argued, of waiting for the state legislature to recommend bifurcation or scrapping of Article 370 and 35A would have meant waiting till eternity, considering the vested interests which the politicians (read the two or three dynasties) had come to acquire in the status quo.

The constitution is sacrosanct but not modifiable. We have had more than 120 amendments and are still counting. During Indira Gandhi’s time, the term ‘socialist secular’ was introduced in the preamble of the Constitution. Even the article 35A was introduced much later. The J&K constitution was given a go by to office of a separate Prime Minister for the state. The point is that exigencies can demand amendment and the vestiges of the old order have to go. In case, there is doubt about following the proper procedure, then the Supreme Court has to decide about it.

Those shedding tears on the ‘murder of democracy’ should appreciate the Home Minister’s observation that the parliamentarians voicing such accusations were sent by merely 5-7% voters, whereas the Panchayat elections held later under the President’s rule saw the participation of around 50% of the populace. This means that the people felt the terrorist threat had receded and they were secure enough to cast vote. A natural
corollary follows that in future too, they can feel relieved of the terror threat as the Centre will be able to effectively tackle this menace. The move will open up vistas of growth for the Kashmiri people by encouraging private businessmen and industrialists to set up industries and businesses there and provide jobs to the local people. People from all over the country will feel more secure now giving a fillip to tourism in the state.

The fear of ethnic cleansing is voiced by those who gained from the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pundits, thousands of whom are still living as refugees in their own country. The perpetrators of the crimes against the Pundit community are only possessed by the guilt complex. The successive state governments winked as the terror outfits threatened and drove out the Pundit community. Now is the time for meting out justice to the Pundits by bringing them back home.

Pakistan’s hue and cry are understandable but not justifiable considering that it was not a party to the settlement between Pandit Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah. Spurred by its role in the Afghanistan imbroglio, it had sought to bolster the proxy war in a bid to internationalize the Kashmir issue. Its recent misadventures on the LOC were partly responsible for the quick action undertaken by the Modi government. The world will take note of Imran Khan’s latest threat of many Pulwamas happening, which is a clear admission that the original Pulwama attack was the handiwork of Pakistan. On the international stage, Pakistan will now lose the semblance of locus standi, which it believed it had.

The only losers will be the three political families which have held the future of the Kashmiri people to ransom. They have their own children studying abroad while they pamper the terrorists to torch the schools in the valley. It is a hard fact that lakhs and crores of rupees sent by the Centre for the betterment of the state have ended up in the coffers of corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. Had this money been utilized properly, the situation at the ground level would not have been so dismal. Moreover, terrorism grew there due to these leaders and their parties who failed to keep the trust of the people. They should now atone for their misdeeds and let the Kashmiri people enjoy peace and prosperity.
As a citizen of India with no particular political affinity, I am proud of the brave decision taken by Central Government through its decision of abrogating Article 370. It is a signal of development and a new era for Jammu & Kashmir. It may be a simplistic view to a very complex situation, but for the last 70 years, the conflict has only escalated in Jammu and Kashmir because of Article 370, for which the youth was completely alienated.

The provision was intended to guard the politics of the day when enacted, which meant the unstable political situation of the state during partition. The Constitution-makers, through Article 370, just intended to make sure that the condition was eased through such a measure. As it turned out, even after 70 years, the political situation hardly influenced the development in a positive manner through the provision. Hence, doing away with it can ensure the correct utilization of the central funds.

Obviously, our elected government must have gone through all the legal, political aspects of the issue from all angles. The consequences & benefits of this historical step must have been conferred upon to the minutest details. It is not a capricious decision of the ignoramus. And we have to respect the decision and support it in all its entity.

When the country is celebrating, there are elements reacting in a very knee-jerk manner. The sole purpose of them has been to plunder Kashmir and make its residents insecure and marginalized. We should give them a chance and even they must give a chance to themselves. Being misguided for 70 long years, they need to understand what is good for them. Intelligent thinking is required by the residents of J&K, where they have to analyse their present for a better future.
Its time to celebrate and rejuvenate the future of the Kashmiris and we should support the Kashmiris on their road to empowerment in a constructive fashion.