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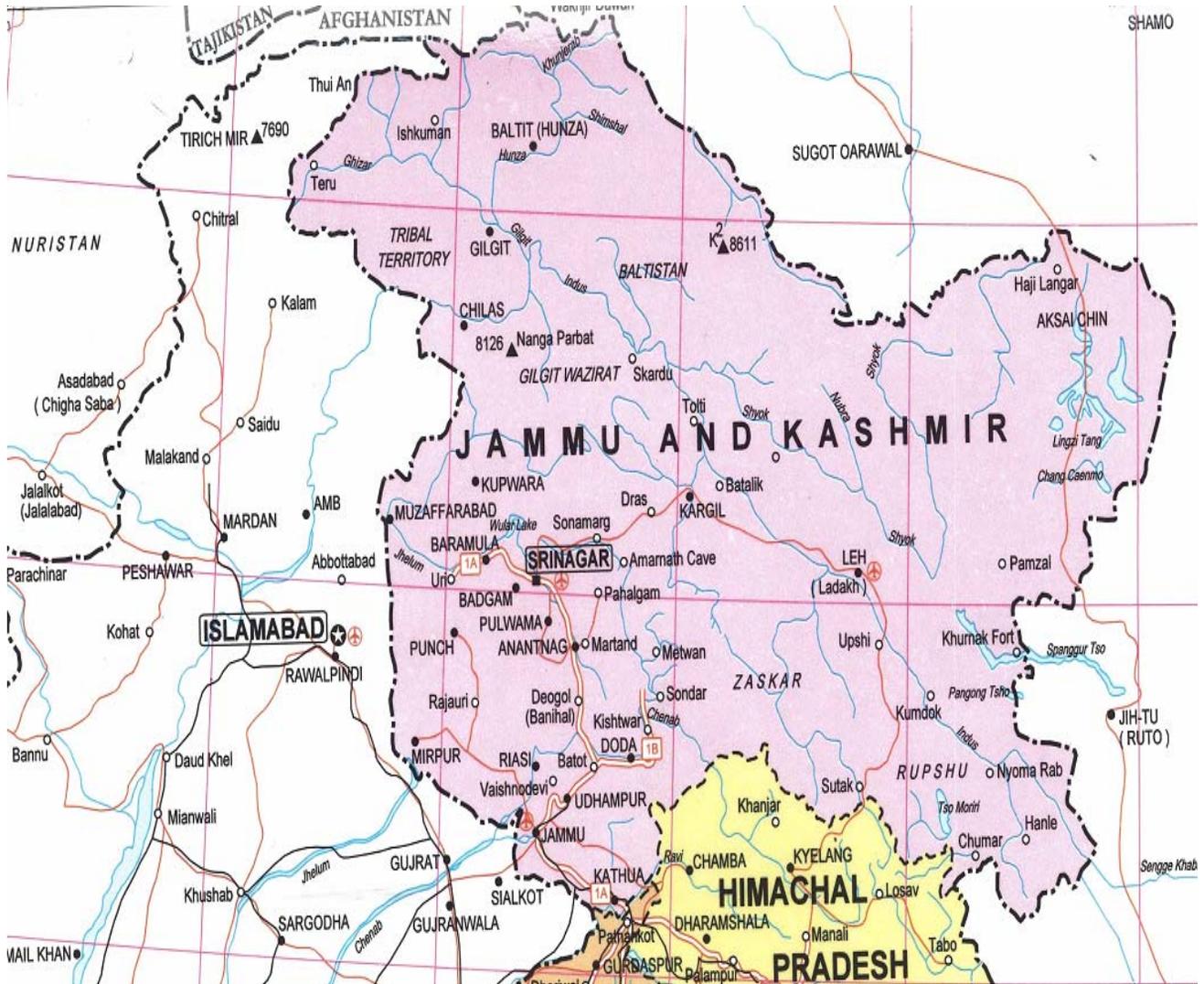
Layout

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Jammu & Kashmir

(Source: Based on the Survey of India Map, Govt of India 2000)

About this Issue

The reports compiled in the current issue indicate the continuing trends of negligence and absence of proper governance in the Pakistan occupied Kashmir. Nonetheless the democratically elected government of Pakistan is showing some concern in the long pending issues involving the state of the economy and poor governance. It may not be easy however for the establishment in Pakistan to substantiate its verbal commitments towards this region as it is fully engaged on other fronts such as NWFP and FATA. Even if Pakistan experiments an AJK-like set up in the Northern Areas as is suggested in one of the reports, it would perhaps do least to address grievances amongst people who are seeking a separate identity and self rule.

A significant development covered in the issue is the activity of the militants in the PoK. The region allegedly is known to be a safe haven for terrorists operating not only in Kashmir but also for militants linked with international terror outfits like Al Qaeda. The Chief of Hizbul Mujahideen, Syed Salahudin led a procession in Muzaffarabad in early September which shouted anti-India slogans. This audacious act in PoK from one of the deadliest Kashmiri terrorist group in a way reiterates Pakistan's role in Kashmir militancy.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

Usman Manzoor, “AJK chief justice’s seniority case dumped,” The News, September 20, 2008

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (KANA) has quietly dumped the matter of controversial seniority and appointment of Chief Justice of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) despite the fact that its notice was taken by the prime minister of Pakistan. The ministry had started paper work to de-notify the appointment of Justice Riaz Akhtar Chaudhry, who was superseded in 2006 by a judge six years junior to him in judicial service. However the matter has now been quietly pushed under the rug even after the prime minister pointed out the controversial appointment. Justice Riaz Akhtar Chaudhry was first appointed as judge of the Supreme Court of the AJK on September 24, 2006 and then as its chief justice within 20 days of his appointment by superseding the senior-most judge, Justice Manzoor Hussain Gillani, who was senior to him by six years. Justice Riaz also remained a junior judge with Justice Gilani in Kashmir High Court when Justice Gillani was the Chief Justice of Kashmir High Court for about four years.

(http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=2)

“Kashmir issue & Gilgit, Baltistan,” Weekly Bang-e-Sahar, September 20 -September 26, 2008

The assassination of PPP chairperson Benazir Bhutto and the February 18 general elections completely changed the political landscape of Pakistan with Musharraf stepping down under pressure. Soon after coming to power, the new government under pressure of the Bush administration issued a notification to bring the ISI under the control of the ministry of interior. However, it could not sustain the order and within 24 hours had to withdraw the notification. Soon after this, the jihadi elements in Kashmir came out in open again and a protest was launched on the pretext of a trivial issue. In Gilgit-Baltistan too, hate

literatures, wall-chalking and speeches against nationalist forces are going on. With the coming to power of the democratic government on the one hand, law and order situation is being created in Gilgit-Baltistan while on the other President Asif Zardari has announced that people would soon hear good news on Kashmir. Besides the appointment of Fazalur Rehman as chairman of the Kashmir committee has perturbed observers of the Kashmir issue.

(<http://gilgitbaltistantimes.blogspot.com/2008/09/kashmir-issue-gilgit-baltistan.html>)

“People of Hunza feel strongly against job discrimination”

HUNZA: The leaders of political and civil society organizations from Hunza have blamed the Gilgit-Baltistan administration for nepotism and favoritism in recruitments for government jobs in which sectarian and regional considerations were being employed by organized pressure groups and mafias that rule the roost in bureaucracy and political organization of the region. The population of Hunza valley is about 60,000 and the literacy rate for both men and women is above 80 per cent. The share of Hunza in public sector employment is, however, negligible. A large number of youth were employed in tourism and NGO sectors but both of these sectors were badly suffering due to law and order situation in Pakistan. There is strong feeling of resentment against the discriminatory policies of the present administration.

(<http://hunzatimes.wordpress.com/2008/09/18/people-of-hunza-feel-strongly-against-job-discrimination/>)

DJ Mathal, “Local political leadership is knocked out,” Weekly Bang-e-Sahar, September 20-September 26, 2008

Once again the so-called political leadership of Gilgit-Baltistan has testified its hollowness. When former president Pervez Musharraf was at the peak of his power, the elected representatives of Gilgit-Baltistan toed his lines claiming that they were supporting the PML-Q for the best interest of the people of the region. But as soon as the downfall

of Musharraf came and the PPP ascended to power, these opportunists continued the same mantra of national interest. These elements have caused irreparable damage to the political system of the region during the last over 60 years. In fact the people of the region have been voting such elements to power and sending them to assemblies for the last over six decades but the so-called leaders have no vision of their future objectives. This is the reason that public mandate has been insulted time and again. The question also arises here that why Pakistan accepts such turncoat politicians. It is in order to perpetuate the Pakistani rule over the region. Pakistan People's Party is a well-known democratic party but unfortunately it has also welcomed turncoat politicians into its fold. This time it also seems that the PPP would make use of the PML-Q turncoats to come home to roost in Gilgit-Baltistan.

(<http://gilgitbaltistantimes.blogspot.com/2008/09/local-political-leadership-is-knocked.html>)

“Govt mulls over AJK-like setup for Northern Areas,” Weekly Bang-e-Sahar, September 20-September 26, 2008

GILGIT: The federal government has decided in principle to give Gilgit-Baltistan a political and constitutional set-up like that in force at Azad Kashmir. The formal announcement of the decision would be made by President Asif Ali Zardari soon, sources said. According to sources in the PPP Northern Areas chapter, the federal government while finalizing the proposed draft constitutional and legal package took the leadership of Gilgit-Baltistan on board. The reports and recommendations submitted by the political leadership of the region regarding the backwardness and socio-economic, political and constitutional deprivation were also taken into account. The sources also said that to give representation to the region, a politician from the region was likely to be appointed as the prime minister's adviser who would be updating the PM on the situation of the region. Besides, empowering of the Northern Areas Legislative Assembly and making the local administration accountable to the house was also under consideration.

Reform in the judiciary and reactivating the public account committee was also part of the package.

(<http://gilgitbaltistantimes.blogspot.com/2008/09/govt-mulls-over-ajk-like-setup-for.html>)

“Kashmiris’ involvement must in Pak-India dialogue: PM,” Associated Press of Pakistan, September 13, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani on September 12 stressed the need for Pakistan and India to narrow down their divergences on Kashmir, and said Kashmiris must be part of the dialogue process. “We strongly believe that Kashmiris should be an integral component of the ongoing peace process, as they are the primary stakeholders,” the Prime Minister stated in his opening remarks at the 42nd session of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council. The Prime Minister, who is also the Chairman of AJK Council addressed the meeting attended by AJK President Raja Zulqarnain Khan, Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan and other members of the Council.

(http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=52474&Itemid=2)

“Turabi urges Govt to resolve Northern Areas’ issues,” Pakistan News, September 12, 2008

Jamaat-e-Islami AJK Amir Abdul Rashid Turabi said on September 11 that Pakistan government must resolve the issues of Northern Areas here. While addressing the media and his party workers, he asserted, “The uneasiness of the people can't be removed without addressing their issues”. He demanded that the government must devise a policy in accordance with the people's aspirations. Turabi further said that the government should resolve their issues on prior basis as the people are deprived of basic rights. Abdul Rashid Turabi also said, “We can feel their pain as they are part of us”.

(<http://paknewsupdate.com/?p=527>)

“The U-turn of NALA members,” Weekly Bang-e-Sahar, September 13-September 19, 2008

For the last 61 years, Gilgit-Baltistan has been under the administrative control of Pakistani federal minister. Started in 1970s with the name of a consultative assembly, today this house is called Northern Areas Legislative Assembly. There is no such precedent in the whole world where people are not authorized even to choose the head of their representative body. The so-called house has in the past been called by different names based on its performance. This useless body has become a gathering place of opportunists and turncoats. The credential of the so-called political leaders associated with this house is such that they never tire of serving the bureaucracy and federal ministers against the wishes of the masses and at the cost of the bright future of Gilgit-Baltistan. Whenever the people rise against the deprivation and injustices, these elements come to the rescue of the rulers by hoodwinking the masses that their problems would be resolved on a priority basis. They also remain in the fore-front in subduing the public anger by propagating the so-called packages and development projects of the rulers. Time has proved that neither the so-called packages were implemented nor the claims of spreading a network of development projects in the region ever proved to be true. One feels ashamed after reading the statements of many of the leaders in the press.

(<http://gilgitbaltistantimes.blogspot.com/2008/09/u-turn-of-nala-members.html>)

“PPP, PSF, PYO hold pro-Zardari rallies in Azad Kashmir,” Associated Press of Pakistan, September 04, 2008

KOTLI: PSF, PYO and PPP’s other party wings took out pro-Zardari rallies in all the eight districts, tehsils, sub-divisions and towns of Azad Kashmir on September 03. In district Kotli, PPP took out a big rally in which people chanted pro-PPP and pro-Zardari slogans. The participants of rally marched in the city bazars which culminated at Shaheed Chowk. Addressing the rally, the speakers said that Asif Ali Zardari is a man of letters and people have full confidence in him and his leadership qualities, adding, he is the man who is capable enough to steer the

country out of crisis and can put the country on road to progress and prosperity. They said PPP was the symbol of federation and always played its due role for the solidarity and integrity of the country. The speakers included Ch. Yasin, Matloob Inqalabi, MLA Shazia Akbar, Naseer Rathore, Mazhar Kazmi, Qazafi Chughtai, M. Ali Rathore and others.

(http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=51366&Itemid=2)

“Gilgit-Baltistan’s constitutional status,” Weekly Bang-e-Sahar, September 06-September 12, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Nationalist leaders of Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir have called for joint struggle for the revival of the identity of the disputed region and for the attainment of constitutional, political and economic rights. “The nationalist and progressive forces, both in Pakistan-administered Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, should join hands and launch struggle for attainment of socio-political and constitutional rights usurped by the rulers of Pakistan for the last over six decades”, said leaders of All Parties National Alliance (APNA) while speaking at a press conference here. Those who were present on the occasion included APNA secretary-general, Sardar Mohammad Sabir Kashmiri, press secretary Prof M.A.R.K Khaleeq, spokesman Wazir Shafi, Mirza Wajahat Hassan Khan, Arif Shahid and Manzoor Husain Parwana. They said Gilgit-Baltistan has been denied its basic human rights only because it is part of the disputed Kashmir region. They said Gilgit-Baltistan, which the government calls Northern Areas, has been kept deprived of all political, economic and constitutional rights for the last over 60 years. The same is the case with the people of Azad Kashmir. In the past both these regions had remained part of the Dogra rule. Therefore, it is necessary that nationalist and progressive parties in both Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir should join hands and launch a movement for attaining the political, economic and constitutional rights of the people. They said APNA (Jammu Kashmir & Gilgit-Baltistan) was set up in the early 2001 to first end militancy and terrorism in the region and then launch a political

movement to resolve the Kashmir issue in accordance with the wishes of the people and ensure all basic rights for the masses. Another objective of the alliance was to bring the people of Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan closer as they have been denied their due rights for the last over six decades. A number of political parties and other forces have joined the alliance and many were planning to join it. And secondly, people of both the region, especially the educated class, have started realizing the sufferings of the masses and are stressing joint efforts to resolve them.

(<http://gilgitbaltistantimes.blogspot.com/2008/09/gilgit-baltistans-constitutional-status.html>)

Abu Arqam Naqash, “Militants stage anti-India rally in Pakistani Kashmir,” September 05, 2008

MUZAFFARABAD: Hundreds of Kashmiri militants rallied on the Pakistani side of the disputed region on September 04. “Our path, our aim is jihad,” shouted protesters led by Syed Salahuddin, head of the main Kashmiri guerrilla group, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, as they marched through the streets of Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan occupied Kashmir. Armed guards escorted Salahuddin as he made victory signs and chanted slogans along with protesters while he was driven through the city in an open-topped jeep. “Let it be clear to the whole world that our struggle will continue with full force,” he said in a speech.

(<http://justsamachar.com/popular/militants-stage-anti-india-rally-in-pakistani-kashmir/?r=http://feeds.reuters.com/~r/reuters/INtopNews/~3/383288586/idINIndia-35318620080904>)

“Call to Restore State Subject Rule in Gilgit Baltistan”

SKARDU: Chairman Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement (GBUM), Manzoor Husain Parwana said the local population of the region is faced with insecurity due to the monopoly of the alien bureaucracy. He said if efforts to turn the local population into a minority by settling outsiders in the region were not stopped, the area would see FATA-like situation. He stated this while addressing the workers of the All Parties National Alliance (APNA)’s

central working committee. He said to keep Gilgit-Baltistan clear of terrorists, extremists and anti-social elements, strict implementation of the State Subject Rule had become necessary. He said outsiders making huge properties in the region under the patronage of civil and military bureaucracy were a big challenge for Gilgit-Baltistan, adding if the trend was not stopped the future of the region would be unsafe. Mr Parwana said the brave people of Yaseen-Gandayai had taken a bold step by raising voice against plundering of their resources by a foreign company. He said the people of Gilgit-Baltistan should not take side with those who were hell-bent on selling the resources of the region at throwaway prices to outsiders. If we failed to protect our natural resources, our next generation would face starvation, he added. He said if the trend to allot land in Gilgit-Baltistan and issue leases to outsiders continued the people of the region would be compelled to take any action to protect their land and resources.

(<http://skardu.blogspot.com/2008/09/called-to-restore-state-subject-rule-in.html>)

“PML-Q splits in Northern Areas,” Daily Times, September 04, 2008

ISLAMABAD: After formation of “forward blocs” in the Centre, Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) may also lose its two-thirds majority in the Northern Areas Legislative Assembly after several of its top members switched loyalties. Of the 36-member House, 27 legislators belong to the PML-Q, but their chief executive and all of his six advisers have announced they will now support the Pakistan People’s Party. Although not part of Electoral College for the presidential election, the Northern Areas chief executive said in a press conference in Gilgit he would bring a resolution in support of presidential frontrunner PPP Co-chairman Asif Zardari for “moral support”.

(http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C09%5C04%5Cstory_4-9-2008_pg7_41)

“AJK Assembly backs Zardari,” The News, September 06, 2008

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on September 05

adopted a resolution supporting the election of PPP Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari as the President of Pakistan and termed his election vital for the federation. The AJK Legislative Assembly, in its special session, met here with Speaker AJK Legislative Assembly Shah Ghulam Qadir in the chair. The session was summoned on the requisition of the AJK government. Deputy Speaker Sardar Farooq Ahmed Tahir, on behalf of the AJK government, presented a resolution before the House in favour of the PPP co-chairman supporting his nomination as the president of Pakistan. The resolution was adopted. Leader of the House Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, speaking on the occasion, said that after the martyrdom of Benazir Bhutto, Asif Ali Zardari had played an important role for the unity of the country. "This is our moral obligation to approve the resolution in his support to be elected as president."

(http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=52012&Itemid=2)

"Extending NAs Legislative Assembly similar status to AJK assembly urged," Associated Press of Pakistan, September 09, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Member, Northern Areas Legislative Council Haji Muhammad Iqbal has called for extending Northern Areas Legislative Assembly the same status as given to Azad Kashmir Assembly till the resolution of lingering Kashmir dispute. "The people of Northern Areas be given their political and financial rights on the pattern of Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly for their socio-economic upliftment and removing their sense of political deprivation" The Member Northern Areas Legislative Assembly regretted that both electronic and print media are projecting Sawat, Kashmir, South and North Waziristan as Northern Areas which he said was affecting tourism in Northern Areas as well as Pakistan.

"Zardari gives green signal to PM AJK for completing tenure"

ISLAMABAD: Federal government has rejected

the suggestion of in house change after Eid in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) while President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari has given the green signal to Prime Minister AJK Sardar Atique to complete his tenure. According to reliable sources Presidency has made it clear to the leadership of PPP (AJK) that federation was not in the position of toppling the AJK government or bring in house change because it would create negative impact. Sources further said that influential personalities of AJK including GOC Murree has made it clear that Federal government should avoid any attempt of toppling AJK government because it could make Base Camp controversial. PPP AJK's president Chaudhary Abdul Majid, Secretary General Chaudhary Latif Akbar, Vice President Chaudhary Yasin stepped up the series of meeting with Sardar Qamar-uz-Zaman Kaira, Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas after the disconnection from presidency.

(<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=133731>)

"OIC terms suicidal attacks un-Islamic," Associated Press of Pakistan, September 17, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Assistant Secretary General of Organisation of Islamic Conference, (OIC) Kemal Izat Mufti on September 16 strongly condemned the suicide attacks and hooliganism against the humanity and termed it "against the holy spirit of Islam". He stated this while addressing a press conference, flanked by Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Sardar Ateeq Ahmad Khan after a detailed visit to Azad Kashmir. Kamel Izat also appreciated particularly the Prime Minister of AJK, who facilitated his visit and made it more productive and worthwhile. Mr.Izat Mufti maintained that he obtained facts about the ground realities in an easier way owing to meeting arranged with AJK President Sardar Zulqarnain and also meeting with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani.

(http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=52905&Itemid=2)

Economic Developments

Sayed Abid Hussain Shah, “AJK to have independent economy: minister,” The News, September 18, 2008

MIRPUR: The government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir intends to take revolutionary steps to establish an independent economy based on self-reliance for the welfare of the masses across the liberated territory. The AJK Minister for Electricity, Malik Muhammad Nawaz said

the government has launched a human resource development programme so that the state may have its own skilled workers and to ensure their active and fullest role in the overall speedy progress in all sectors of life.

(http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=136479)

“Rs. 1.60 billion broad-based AJK-wide mass electrification plan launched,” Associated Press of Pakistan, September 16, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Minister Incharge for Kashmir Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira presented the budget-2008-09 of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Council with total revenue receipts target of Rs5,678.312 million, including Rs. 3,500 million from Income Tax. The budget was presented during the first sitting of the 42nd AJK Council session at the AJK Council Secretariat under the chairmanship of AJK Council Vice-Chairman and AJK President Raja Zulqarnain Khan. Presenting the budget, Kaira said development expenditure had been estimated at Rs. 2,000 million, non-development expenditure of Rs693.049 million and 80 per cent share of Income Tax to the AJK government. Thus, the total expenditure has been estimated at Rs. 5,678.312 million. Kaira informed the house that the government was preparing an economic and social development report for the AJK on the pattern of other provinces. He said the Kashmiri people had undergone untold sufferings and hardships over the years. Their legitimate aspirations cannot be ignored and must be accommodated, he added.

(<http://www.pakearth.com/pakistan-news/rs5.678bn-ajk-council-budget-presented-3.php>)

“AJK Council approves budget for 2008-09,” Associated Press of Pakistan, September 13, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on September 12 reiterated government’s full support to the people of Kashmir for their right of self determination and stressed resolution of the dispute according to the wishes of its people. He was chairing the 42nd session of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K) Council. The Council accorded approval of the budget of AJ&K Council for the year 2008-09 and revised estimates for the year 2007-08. The Prime Minister underlined the need to ensure transparency in every action of government spending to observe good governance. The Council also granted approval in principle of the motion moved by the Minister in-charge for the allocation of land in Islamabad for the AJ&K Council Secretariat to cater to the residential requirements of its employees.

(http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=52484&Itemid=2)

Iftikhar Gilani, “AJK team to visit Srinagar to discuss cross-LoC trade,” Daily Times, September 11, 2008

NEW DELHI: Pakistan on September 10 handed over to India a list of a 12-member delegation of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry planning to visit Indian-held Kashmir. The delegation is to visit Srinagar in order to finalise the arrangements for trade across the Line of Control (LoC) via the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad Road. The delegation, led by Zulfiqar Abbasi, included Raja Muhammad Jamil, Raja Khalid Muhammad Khan, Muhammad Azim Mushtaq, Abdul Qayum Qamar and Khalid Sharif.

(http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C09%5C11%5Cstory_11-9-2008_pg7_19)

“OIC special representative to visit Islamabad AJK,” September 14, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Special Representative of OIC Secretary General on Kashmir visited Islamabad and Muzaffarabad from September 14 to 16 to implement OIC resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir. Ambassador Ezzat Kamel Mufti met the top leadership of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. He will also held meetings with representatives of APHC (AJK), and visit quake-affected areas of AJK. Ambassador Mufti was accompanied by a four-member delegation comprising senior officials of the OIC General Secretariat, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF).

(<http://www.asianews.com.pk/oic-special-representative-to-visit-islamabad-ajk-9063>)

“AJK approves Rs 30m grant for doctors,” Daily Times, September 24, 2008

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) government approved a special package of Rs. 30 million for specialist doctors and medical superintendents appointed in remote areas.

According to a press release issued here on September 23, the doctors working in remote areas would be paid Rs 10,000 to Rs 20,000 monthly as a special package. Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan gave the approval keeping in view the difficulties of doctors working at basic health centres and tehsil headquarters of far-flung areas. The finance department issued a formal notification in this regard.

(http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C09%5C24%5Cstory_24-9-2008_pg7_53)

Iftikhar Gilani, “Committee declines to give timetable for opening Srinagar-Muzaffarabad, Poonch-Rawalakot trade routes,” Daily Times, September 23, 2008

NEW DELHI: Trade across the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir moved a step closer as Indian and Pakistani officials completed talks on a framework on September 22. A brief statement issued after a daylong meeting of the Joint Working Group on Cross-LoC

Confidence Building Measures in the Indian capital did not say when trade routes would be opened. But a top Indian official said last week that India would allow trade between the two parts of Kashmir to begin in October. Indian Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary TCA Raghavan led the Indian delegation, and Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs Additional Secretary for South Asia Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry led the Pakistan delegation. Commerce, customs and home ministry officials attended the meeting. “We have finalised the modalities at the meeting. We decided to submit details of the modalities to our respective political leadership for the final decision and announcement,” said Chaudhry after the meeting.

(http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C09%5C23%5Cstory_23-9-2008_pg7_1)

Shah Hasan, “Rs 5b Jagran hydropower station, Pakistan to help AJK,” September 26, 2008

Islamabad—Pakistan is to help Azad Jammu and Kashmir establish Jagran Hydropower station at the cost of over Rs, 5 billion including the foreign exchange component of Rs 2.2224 billion. The government of Pakistan, 2.78 billion out of local component allocated for the project is to share 70 percent financing while AJK government will provide 30 percent funding to materialize the project. The Jagran Hydropower station will be based on run of river, which is why the operation of powerhouse will depend upon the availability of flow, having total catchments area of 317 kilometres square from source to its confluence with Neelum river.

(<http://pakobserver.net/200809/26/news/topstories09.asp>)

“Pakistan plundering Northern Areas resources, UN told,” Weekly Bang-e-Sahar , September 06-September 12, 2008

In a letter to United Nations Secretary General Ban-ki-Moon, Balawaristan National Front Chairman, Abdul Hamid Khan alleged that Pakistan is violating all human rights and plundering the resources of the region.

“Your Excellency, I had already sent an appeal to your honour titled ‘Restrain China and Pakistan from Occupation’ about the violation of UN resolutions in Balawaristan (Pakistan occupied Gilgit Baltistan) which is the “Last colony of 21st century” instead of the fact that Balawaristan does not fall under the jurisdiction and constitution of Pakistan and its laws. Pakistan is violating all human rights obligations and wants to permanently occupy this region by plundering its resources itself as well as by giving major share to China with impunity. Balawaristan is an important area of disputed Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) because of its borders with China, Afghanistan, Central Asia (Tajikistan and Uzbekistan etc) and India. Pakistan had given the lease of about 40 km area of village Gindayi, Tehsil Yasen, District Ghezer of copper, gold and other precious mines including uranium to a Chinese company without the consultation of the owners. This is a disputed part of Jammu & Kashmir whose fate is still to be decided between India and Pakistan. This case is pending in United Nations (UNCIP) since 13th August 1948. Later, local people had raised objection to the Chinese company on 13th July, 2008 and dislodged Chinese items from the mines area. The government registered cases against the local people to appease Chinese government. The NALA and its speaker can be dissolved any time without giving notice by the Ministry of Kashmir and Northern Areas Affairs (KANA). The government of Pakistan wants to give as many areas to China as it can before the settlement of J&K issue.

(<http://gilgitbaltistantimes.blogspot.com/2008/09/pakistan-plundering-northern-areas.html>)

“UNICEF involved in child labour in Kashmir,” Kashmir Watch , September 17, 2008

UN Children’s agency, UNICEF (United Nations International Children’s’ Emergency Fund) has been found involved in child labour in earthquake-affected areas of Azad Kashmir. More than 2000 Community health workers were employed in a six-month project from March to August 2006 to “promote healthy and hygienic behaviors and provide essential health services”. UNICEF’s implementing partner-Pakistan’s National Rural Supports Programme (NRSP) engulfed in controversies since it began its activities in Kashmir after October 08, 2005 earthquake and made these controversial recruitments. The National Rural Supports Programme (NRSP), which is also USAIDS’s implementing partner, is confronted with widespread public resentment in quake-hit areas for “failing to deliver”. Many Community Health Workers were under age girls.

(<http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showexclusive.php?subaction=showfull&id=1221681342archive=&startfrom=&ucat=15&var1news=valuenews>)

Other Developments

Tariq Naqash, “Neelum valley residents ask India to abandon Kishan Ganga plan,” September 22, 2008

Muzaffarabad: Pakistan and India should maintain truce along the Line of Control and find a peaceful political solution to the Kashmir dispute instead of going for a war. This demand was made at a seminar held under the aegis of Press for Peace, a non-governmental organisation working for freedom of press and environmental protection, in Athmuqam, district headquarters of Neelum valley, to mark the World Peace Day on September 21. Stoppage of water of River Neelum would not only affect the downstream aquatic life but would also be hazardous to the environment and ecosystem in the valley, it noted.

(http://www.greaterkashmir.com/full_story.asp?Date=22_9_2008&ItemID=30&cat=1)

“PM Gilani lauds donors’ role for quake victims’ rehabilitation,” September 19, 2008

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on September 18 appreciated the commitment of donor agencies for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the 2005-earthquake affected areas. “Due to the inherent resilience of the affected people and assistance from the global community, the government has managed to complete the relief and rescue operations successfully,” he said while addressing the donors and sponsors of the earthquake affected areas of Azad Kashmir and NWFP at an Iftar dinner at the Prime Minister’s House. The prime minister said the damage was huge but the help and courage of the people proved greater than the catastrophe.

(<http://www.paktribune.com/news/index.shtml?205863>)

ABBREVIATIONS

AJKHEB	Azad Jammu and Kashmir Hydro Electric Board
AJK	Azad Jammu & Kashmir
APHC	All Parties Hurriyat Conference
BNF	Balawaristan National Front
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CDP	Community Development Programme
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
GBDA	Gilgit-Baltistan Democratic Alliance
GBUM	Gilgit Baltistan United Movement
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
JIAJK	Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Jammu & Kashmir
KKH	Karakoram Highway
KNM	Karakoram National Movement
LoC	Line of Control
NLI	Northern Light Infantry
NALA	Northern Areas Legislative Assembly
NAEDC	Northern Areas Executive Development Committee
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PoK	Pakistan Occupied Kashmir
POGB	Pakistan occupied Gilgit Baltistan
PPP	Pakistan Peoples’ Party
UJC	United Jihad Council
WAPDA	Water and Power Development Authority

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir-An Overview

Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), legitimately an integral part of the Indian Union is presently under Pakistan's control. Pakistan occupied the territory as a result of tribal invasion in 1947 engineered by the Pakistani army. It covers one-third of the total area of 86,023 square miles/ 222,236 square kilometers of the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The area under occupation comprises two administrative units: Mirpur- Muzaffarabad and Gilgit Baltistan referred as 'Azad Kashmir' and the 'Northern Areas' respectively by the government of Pakistan. Pakistan ceded a segment (2,700 sq miles) of this occupied territory lying to the north-east border of the Northern Areas known as the Trans Karakoram Tract to China in 1963.

“AZAD KASHMIR”

Pakistan envisaged the Azad Kashmir as a country with a President, a Prime Minister and a Legislature of its own according to the Karachi Agreement of April 28, 1949. These structures and the designations are only titular in nature as this invaded territory is neither a country nor even a province. Significant subjects such as defence, supposed 'foreign policy' of POK, rehabilitation of refugees and the overall control have been carefully placed under the discretion of the political establishment of Pakistan.

Area: 13,297 square km

Mirpur comprises 3 districts: *Bhimber, Kotli, Mirpur*

Muzaffarabad is divided into five districts: *Bagh, Muzaffarabad, Neelum, Poonch, Sudhnati*

Population: 3,271,000 (1.685 million Male, 1.665 million Female)

Capital: Muzaffarabad

“President”: Raja Zulfikar Khan

“Prime Minister”: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan

“Azad Jammu and Kashmir” Council: Total 11 members- 6 from the government of AJK and 5 from the government of Pakistan. The AJK Council is headed by the President AJK.

Legislative Assembly: 49 seats

Tribal population: Awan, Abbasi, Ansari, Gilani, Gujar, Jarral, Jat, Qureshi, Malik, Mughal, Pashtuns, Rajput, Rachyals, Sudhan, Tarkhan

NORTHERN AREAS

The **Northern Areas** officially referred to by the government of Pakistan as the **Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA)**, is the northernmost political entity within the Pakistan occupied part of Kashmir and is a self governing unit under Pakistani control. The area is five times bigger to that of Azad Kashmir. The status of this region being unstated in the successive constitutions of Pakistan over the years, the people are denied basic socio-political and legal rights. The Northern Areas have no representation in the National Assembly and are governed by the Northern Areas Council headed by Minister of Kashmir and Northern Areas. A Judicial Commissioner exercises judicial powers in the absence of a High Court. The population mainly comprises Shia, Sunni and Ismaili Muslims. Ethnic groups include Baltees, Shinas, Vashkuns, Mughals, Kashmiris, Pathans, Ladhakhis and Turks.

Governor/ Commissioner: Imran Ali

“Chief Minister”: Irfan Ali and Shahid Hussain

Legislature: Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (29 seats)

Languages: Balti, Shina, Brushaski, Khawer, Wakhi, Turki, Tibeti, Pushto and Urdu

Area: 72,496 km

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: seven

Baltistan is divided into *Ghanche and Skardu*

Gilgit divided into *Astore, Diamer, Ghizar, Gilgit and Hunza Nagar*

Population: 1.5 million

Political groups: United Jammu and Kashmir Peoples' National Party, Balwaristan National Front (BNF) and Gilgit Baltistan United Action Forum for Self Rule, Gilgit Baltistan United Movement (GBUM).

Literacy rate: 14% male- 3.5% female

State of Infrastructure: No pipelines for water supply and no electricity supply for at least two thirds of the population in Northern Areas.

Disclaimer

PoK News Digest is a collection of news reports and press releases published in various newspapers and local media related to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), referred as 'Azad Kashmir' and 'Northern Areas' by the government of Pakistan. The news reports have been abridged to provide clarity. IDSA is not responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the news items.

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