

POK NEWS DIGEST

A MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST ON PAKISTAN OCCUPIED KASHMIR

Volume 2

Number 10

October 2009

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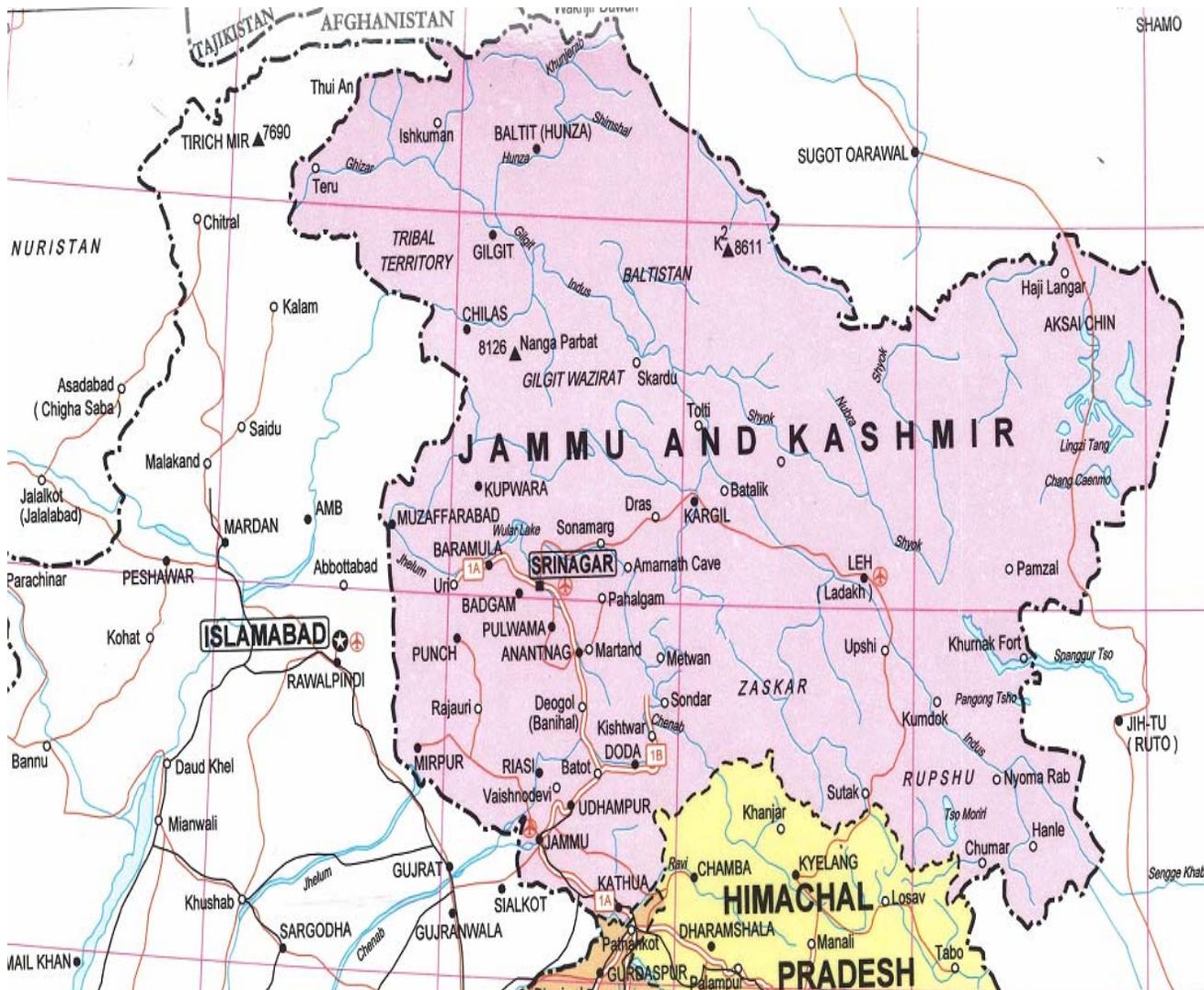
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Jammu & Kashmir

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

About this Issue

There is great deal of despair amongst the local leaders in PoK on the recently announced reforms package on Gilgit Baltistan as indicated in few reports in this issue. The local leadership was not consulted at all in the formative stages of the order and this has led to serious grievances all across the PoK. Getting the sense of prevailing discontent, the government of Pakistan quickly called on the Kashmiri leadership in the PoK to pacify them while asserting that the new order would in no way dilute their commitment on Kashmir issue. Notably, even though it took Pakistan more than 60 years to come out with such an order on Gilgit Baltistan, it has failed miserably to address core issues of political and constitutional autonomy. This is when things are literally getting out of control due to absence of definite political character for this strategically important region.

As stated in the earlier issues of the PoK News digest, China is intently strengthening its hold on the PoK with pools of capital. If one were to speculate on the logical eventuality of the immense Chinese economic presence, it could lead to some of sort of military presence of China in the Gilgit Baltistan. And this could adversely affect the strategic balance in the Indian subcontinent.

Notwithstanding the lack of political understanding between India and Pakistan, cross LoC trade has bright future prospects if the required financial infrastructure, banks etc and communication channels are resurrected between the traders on both sides.

Priyanka Singh

What's in a Name: The Rebirth of Gilgit and Baltistan

Senge Hasnan Sering

For most people in Pakistan, Empowerment and Self-governance Presidential Order 2009 of Gilgit-Baltistan is political gimmickry falling far short of AJK-style self rule, which is the longstanding demand of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. Its salient feature is 'renaming of Gilgit-Baltistan'.¹ The renaming issue may seem inconsequential and not worthy of hype, but in the context of Kashmir, the devil does lie in the name. While going in details, one will find this issue far more threatening to Pakistani interests than, for instance, renaming NWFP as Pakhtunistan.

One is forced to think if the term Gilgit-Baltistan compromises Pakistan's designs of nation-building since it was replaced with a more featureless nomenclature, Northern Areas. The term was fabricated to, firstly, provide a pseudo-legal cover to Pakistan's occupation of the region and deny historical connection with J&K; secondly, to erase the pre-1947 political realities and conceal indigenous identities, which draw attention towards Ladakh, Kashmir and Tibet rather than towards the parts of contemporary Pakistan. Historically, Baltistan was part of Ladakh within J&K and Baltis and Ladakhis share same ethnicity, language and traditions. On the other hand, people of Gilgit share their ethnicity and language with those in Kashmir Valley. Such a notion is threatening to the proponents of Pakistani nationalism, who are obsessed with two-nation theory, and regard ethnic and racial links of Gilgit-Baltistan across into India harming social fabric of their country while it continues to evolve as a Muslim state. Further, the historical name also draws ones attention to the UNCIP resolutions, which demand of Pakistan to withdraw from these regions and reunite them with J&K. The fact that UNCIP resolutions use the name Ladakh for modern-day Baltistan is also concealed by Pakistan.

The Northern Areas - created by Pakistan in 1974 - comprises of four different regions of Jammu & Kashmir, which are:

1. Baltistan; which was part of Ladakh²
2. Gilgit Agency; comprising of modern Gilgit, Ghizer and Diamer districts. It was leased to British in 1935 for sixty years and returned to the Dogras before the partition of India.
3. Gilgit Wazarat or the modern Astore district. When the British created the Gilgit agency, its part on the left bank of the Indus River i.e. Astore valley became a Wazarat. For few years, Astore also remained part of the Kashmir province.
4. Darel-Tangir, the tribal territories of Jammu & Kashmir, which are part of the contemporary Diamer district

It was General Musharraf's regime, which finally agreed to abandon the term Northern Areas. However, instead of reverting to 'Gilgit-Baltistan', he constituted a committee to identify a more suitable name. What does it mean to find a suitable name that will protect Pakistani interests in the region? Among suggested names was a nondescript term, Gulistan, which simply means garden in Persian. The nationalists termed this as shameful and a failed attempt to fabricate a nationality and de-link Gilgit-Baltistan from J&K.

For many in Gilgit, the term Northern Areas makes their existence trivial by reducing the region to a peripheral geographical entity, but at the same time, the name 'Gilgit-Baltistan' also defies the spirit to create a unified nation. For them, the hyphenated name exposes the ethnic fault lines within the Northern Areas and highlights historical rivalry of the dynasties of Gilgit and Baltistan. The hyphenated name i.e. Gilgit and Baltistan, may suggest that both regions are distinct, equal and may compete with each other for control over services and resources within the newly created province-like structure. The people of Chitral, who desire reunification with Gilgit-Baltistan, also demand a name which is representative of all three regions and conferring the sense of ownership to all ethnic groups. Names coined by the nationalists to represent these regions as a nation, like Karakoram, Boloristan and Balawaristan, may need an endorsement from all ethnic groups.

Pakistan fears nationalists of Gilgit and Baltistan uniting on a single platform to attain freedom. To counter such tendencies, the agencies could exploit these underlying realities to advance the scope of divide and rule and cause ethnic and sectarian riots. Ethnic rivalry will weaken the union and allow Pakistan to usurp Gilgit and annex to NWFP. Pakistani official maps already show Gilgit Agency separated from the rest of J&K. Under the blanket-term of Northern Areas, Pakistan includes parts of NWFP, so to justify administrative and political relation of Gilgit-Baltistan with the province. Further, under the same pretext, it also falsely claims Baltistan and Astore as parts of Gilgit Agency, despite that these regions were not a part of the British leased-territory. The Baltis disapprove of reconstruction of history by Pakistan. They fear alienation and loss of identity within the Northern Areas, and demand re-instatement of Ladakh Wazarat. Very few people in Pakistan would admit that until November 2, 1947, Chitral, Swat, Dir and Shinaki-Kohistan were parts of J&K, which were annexed by Pakistan and merged into NWFP only in the 70s³

The creation of province-like structure for Gilgit-Baltistan and its separation from Muzaffarabad is a continuation of the same policy to nibble on bits and parts of J&K.

For a while, the term 'Northern Areas of Pakistan' distracted the international community from its actual role of promoting self determination for Gilgit-Baltistan. Succumbing to local pressure, Pakistan has restored the historical name, which only substantiates the fact that political awareness among the people of Gilgit-Baltistan has improved. However, Pakistan still needs to grant genuine political autonomy and human rights to them. Only time will tell if Pakistani agencies were successful in exploiting the hyphenated name to divide and rule Gilgit-Baltistan; or whether local nationalists were able to reconnect these regions with J&K and win their freedom.

Footnotes

- ¹ http://www.risingkashmir.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16403&Itemid=1
- ² Gupta, S. (1966), 'Kashmir: Study in India Pakistan Relations', Asia Publishers, Bombay pp: 25
- ³ Raina, N. N. (1988), 'Kashmir Politics And Imperialist Manoeuvres 1846-1980', Patriot Publishers, New Delhi pp. 147

* *The Author is Visiting Fellow at IDSA. The views expressed are his personal and not that of IDSA.*

Political Developments

“The Northern Areas Reforms Undertaken Due to Chinese Pressure,”

September 4, 2009

Political and administrative reforms recently announced by Pakistan for its Northern Areas, known officially as Gilgit Baltistan, are aimed at providing better security cover for the rapidly growing Chinese interests in the territory. Gilgit, the capital, has acquired the status of a gateway to Central Asia in the wake of a Pakistan-China barter trade agreement and accords with Central Asian states.

China has invested heavily in a range of projects in the Gilgit Baltistan and is poised to launch several new projects, particularly in power sector, costing billions of dollars. In August 2009, during Zardari’s visit to China, the countries signed a memorandum of understanding on construction of a hydro-power station at Bunji, in Gilgit Baltistan.

<http://alaiwah.wordpress.com/2009/09/04/the-northern-areas-reforms-undertaken-due-to-chinese-pressure/>

“PM-Arrives In Gilgit on Two Day Visit,”

CN News

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani arrived in Gilgit Baltistan on September 29 on a two-day visit where he was expected to announce the development package for the area people. Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira and officials of Pakistan Peoples’ Party (PPP) welcomed him. The prime minister addressed a public gathering today afternoon at Lalak Jan Stadium. He was also expected to make financial announcements for Gilgit Baltistan during his visit.

<http://cnewsworld.co.cc/news/pakistan/pm-arrives-in-gilgit-on-two-day-visit/>

“China violated territorial integrity by keeping parts of J-K under it”

Hizbul Mujahideen chief, Syed Salahuddin, who heads the United Jihad Council (UJC), an alliance of Kashmiri militant groups, said that gifting 43,180 sq km land belonging to Jammu and Kashmir to China

in 1963 by Pakistan is a violation of territorial integrity. The Hizbul Mujahideen chief, who has been living in Pakistan since 1995, also said categorically that Gilgit-Baltistan is an integral part of Jammu and Kashmir State.

http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/india-news/china-violated-territorial-integrity-by-keeping-parts-of-j-k-under-it_100253839.html#

“Governor Gilgit Baltistan wants comprehensive financial package,”

*Associated Press of Pakistan,
September 29, 2009*

GILGIT: Governor, Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira said Gilgit Baltistan needs a comprehensive financial package to undertake development projects. Speaking at a public meeting on September 28, he said the region got a comprehensive political and administrative package which should be followed by substantial financial support. Kaira presented a list of demands to Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani to better living standards of the people. As the area has harsh weather conditions, he said the government employees should get weather allowance equal to that given in Balochistan.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=86765&Itemid=1

“Gunmen kill three, wound eight in Gilgit,”

Dawn, September 30, 2009

GILGIT: At least three people were killed while eight others injured after gunmen opened fire on a rival group in Gilgit. The incident is believed to be sectarian-motivated, possibly in retaliation against a bomb blast that occurred three days ago in the same area. One person was killed and four others were injured in that attack. Security forces have been deployed to keep control of the law and order situation in the area.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/provinces/09-gunmen-killed-three-wound-eight-in-gilgit—szh-01#>

Ahmad Hassan and Farooq Ahmed, “Rs12 billion set aside for uplift of Gilgit-Baltistan,”

Dawn, September 30, 2009

GILGIT: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani announced a socio-economic package for Gilgit-Baltistan on September 29. The package includes a series of projects in education, health, agriculture and tourism. Addressing a big public meeting at the Lalakjan Nishan-i-Haider in Gilgit, the prime minister said the people of Gilgit-Baltistan would have their own governor, chief minister, an independent judiciary and all institutions which came under the new system. He said the region had a huge potential in hydel-power and tourism which would be explored and harnessed properly to boost economy of the area. Hotel business would be given the status of industry, he further added.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/11-rs12-billion-set-aside-for-uplift-of-gilgit-baltistan—il—10>

Asif Ezdi, “The Gilgit-Baltistan bungle,”

The News, September 10, 2009

The Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self-Governance) Order, 2009, approved by the cabinet on August 29 seeks to grant self-rule to the people of the area on the pattern of the autonomy enjoyed by Azad Jammu and Kashmir. As the government itself admits, the promulgation of this Order, which has now been signed by Zardari, implies a rejection of the demand that Gilgit-Baltistan be made a province of Pakistan and that its people be given the same constitutional rights, including representation in the National Assembly and the Senate. The reason given by the government is that acceptance of these demands would go against Pakistan’s obligations under UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir, which give Islamabad administrative powers over the territory but debar any change in its status.

Given this self-imposed constraint, the government had only limited room for action. It could only make those changes in the constitutional structure of Gilgit-Baltistan which would devolve more powers to the people of the territory, but not affect its international status. The last two constitutional measures adopted

by the government for the Northern Areas – in 2000 and 2007 – had also sought to give more powers to the elected Assembly within this constraint. The scope for further devolution was thus quite small. It is therefore no wonder that the changes introduced by the latest constitutional package are by no means of a radical nature.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=197679

Hameed Shaheen, “Qayyum, Sikander agree to reunite MC factions,”

Pakistan Observer, September 29, 2009

RAWALPINDI: The 9-month long split in Muslim Conference (MC) that broke it into two mutually fiercely contending factions in AJK seems now certain to a negotiated heal-up soon with ‘some structural re-adjustments’ at the party plane in Azad Kashmir.

Explicit indications to the party reunification were reportedly available on September 28 following a crucial meeting which took place at Mujahid Manzil between ex-Presidents/Premiers of AJK, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan and Sardar Sikander Hayat Khan. Present on the respective sides were Leader of Opposition in AJK Assembly, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, also president of MC (A), and Member Kashmir Council, Sardar Farooque Sikander.

<http://pakobserver.net/200909/29/news/topstories04.asp>

“GBDA rejects Gilgit Baltistan reforms package,”

Gilgit Baltistan Tribune, September 28, 2009

Gilgit Baltistan Democratic Alliance (GBDA) while rejecting the federal government’s recently announced reforms package demanded to hold elections for the first constitutional assembly of Gilgit Baltistan and Ladakh. Gilgit Baltistan self empowerment package is a deliberate attempt to make fool the people of Gilgit Baltistan as well as the concerned authorities related to the issue, especially the United Nations, said secretary general GBDA, Muhammad Wazir Shafi in a statement issued. He said the so called self empowerment package has nothing to do with the basic rights of the people of Gilgit Baltistan. Besides, it is aimed at collection of taxes by violating the UN

resolutions which said “no taxation without representation.”

<http://gbtribune.blogspot.com/2009/09/gbda-resjctes-gilgit-baltistan-reforms.html>

“Public institutions to have positive impact on Gilgit-Baltistan people,”

*Associated Press of Pakistan
September 28, 2009*

ISLAMABAD: Setting up of independent institutions in Gilgit-Baltistan are hoped to pave way for early resolution of masses problems and facilitate them in a better way. People of Gilgit-Baltistan had to face numerous problems in view of the absence of institutions like Election Commission, Auditor General and Public Service Commission. But, issuance of Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Governance) Order 2009 will not only facilitate the Northern Areas people but also end their sense of deprivation.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=86714&Itemid=2

“Section-144 in Gilgit; pillion riding banned,”

The News, September 27, 2009

GILGIT: Authorities have banned pillion riding in Gilgit city by imposing section-144 while all the arms licenses have been cancelled. Police has arrested 8 people on charges of rioting. District Magistrate Gilgit imposed section-144 in the city following the bomb blast and riots in Gilgit, banning pillion riding. Besides, all the arms licenses were cancelled.

The citizens have asked to cooperate with the law enforcing agencies.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=87717>

Usman Manzoor, “Lawyers seek PM help in AJK CJ’s appointment case,”

September 28, 2009

ISLAMABAD: After getting a cold response from the attorney General (AG) of Pakistan in the Supreme Court, Lawyers of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) have written a letter to Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, demanding his personal indulgence to

direct the AG for early submission of concise statement in the apex court regarding important petitions of AJK judges. The AJK judges and lawyers have filed petitions in the Supreme Court of Pakistan to make the senior most judge of the AJK superior judiciary as its chief justice.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=200469>

“PML-Q for NA body meeting on Gilgit-Baltistan,”

The News, September 29, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), MNA Marvi Memon decided to call a meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Northern Areas to discuss the passing of the self-governance order without the approval of the Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA) or the Kashmir and Northern Areas Standing Committee despite the prime minister’s commitment. In a letter to Chairman National Assembly Standing Committee on Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas, Shehzada Mohiuddin, Marvi Memon stated that the standing committee had only met once since the PPP government took charge 18 months back.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=200541

“PPP and PML-Q stretch muscles for Gilgit-Baltistan polls,”

*Associated Press of Pakistan
September 28, 2009*

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League Quaid-e-Azam (PML-Q) are stretching their muscles for giving each other tough time in upcoming Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly elections. The maiden elections after implementation of Presidential Reforms Package for Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly; previously called Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA), would be held on November 12, 2009 under supervision of the court. Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly consists of total 33 seats out of which 24 members are directly elected while three seats are reserved for technocrats and six for women.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=86711&Itemid=2

“Gilani to head Gilgit-Baltistan Council,”

Daily Times, September 27, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Under the recently promulgated Gilgit-Baltistan Self Governance Order 2009, the prime minister will head the Gilgit-Baltistan Council. The council will consist of the Gilgit-Baltistan Governor and six members chosen from among federal ministers and parliamentarians recommended by the prime minister. The federal minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan will be the non-voting ex-officio member and minister in charge of the council.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C27%5Cstory_27-9-2009_pg7_20

“Four killed in violence after blast in Gilgit,”

Daily Times, September 27, 2009

GILGIT: Four people, including two policemen, were on September 26 shot dead in various incidents of violence in Gilgit following a blast in a local bookshop, officials stated. They said the explosives were placed in a bookstore in a busy market in Gilgit and the explosion killed one and injured four people. Following the blast, enraged protestors started pelting shops with stones and one of the groups clashed with the police as well, in which Superintendent, Ali Sher was shot dead. A police official was also killed when protestors fired at a police van. Rangers and police stepped up security and increased patrolling.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C27%5Cstory_27-9-2009_pg1_8

Luv Puri, “The complex reality of the Northern Areas,”

Dawn, September 24, 2009

Over the years, Pakistan has tried to leverage the geographical advantage of the Northern Areas for its strategic and economic objectives. However, until now, the government desisted from heeding the demand for provincial status for the Northern Areas owing to a concern that it would justify future attempts by India to absorb two-thirds of Jammu and Kashmir.

It is in this context that the recent political package, the Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order, 2009, has been criticised in various quarters in Jammu and Kashmir, including by pro-independence groups such as the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and pro-Pakistani groups such as the Hizbul Mujahideen and its patron, the Jamaat-e-Islami, which demands accession of the state to Pakistan.

The Nawaz Sharif-led Muslim League (PMLN) has also expressed its disapproval of the decision, adding that Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani’s government should have consulted the National Assembly before announcing a political package for the Northern Areas. Amanullah Khan, the leader of the JKLF, in a press statement argued that legally, the Northern Areas is a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/02-the-complex-reality-of-the-northern-areas-02>

“Gilgit-Baltistan polls on Nov 12,”

Dawn, September 24, 2009

SKARDU: Nomination papers for election to the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly will be accepted until October 1 and polling will be held on November 12. According to the election schedule announced here, the last date for submission of objections is October 9 and the final list for candidates will be displayed on October 15. Election symbols will be allotted on October 17. The results will be announced on November 14. According to a television channel, the regional government has decided to appoint the judges as returning officers.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/gilgitbaltistan-polls-on-nov-12-499>

“PML-N sees pre-poll rigging by govt in Gilgit-Baltistan,”

The News, October 4, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-N leveled allegation of pre-poll rigging in Gilgit-Baltistan against the government. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad, PML-N leader and member Gilgit-

Baltistan election committee, Siddiqui Farooq alleged that the government is putting in excessive use the resources and administrative power in Gilgit-Baltistan ahead of the upcoming elections. Transfers and postings on government's sweet will are also being undertaken, making the electoral process controversial, he further added.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=88207>

“Govt to table accountability bill in NA: PM,”

Daily Times, September 21, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The government, in consultation with the opposition, intends to table a new accountability bill in the National Assembly, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani stated on September 20. Gilani made the comments during a meeting with Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President, Raja Zulqarnain Khan, who met him at PM's House to discuss the accountability system in AJK. The PM asked Zulqarnain to ensure transparency in AJK's accountability system. The AJK president informed the PM of some anomalies in the constitution, which Gilani said would be discussed at the next AJK Council meeting.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C21%5Cstory_21-9-2009_pg7_9

“State Terrorism is Responsible for Human Rights Violations in Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan”

In a public meeting as a side event of the 12th Session of the UN Human Rights Council being held from 14th September to 2 October, 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland, participants said that state terrorism is responsible for human rights violations in Balochistan province of Pakistan and the Gilgit-Baltistan region administered by Pakistan. The meeting was organized by Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, an NGO having UN Consultative Status with ECOSOC on the topic of Human Rights and Terrorism: International Responsibilities. It is very sad that some countries are patronizing terrorist groups like the Taliban and others only because they claim to

be holy warriors serving one particular religion. He said that terrorists have no religion and they are going to harm every one.

<http://www.businesswireindia.com/PressRelease.asp?b2mid=20092#>

Justice Syed Manzoor H. Gilani, “Authority of GOP to govern AJK and GB,”

Kashmir Watch, September 22, 2009

Gilgit-Baltistan Self Governance Order 2009, is a welcome break through for further emancipation and empowerment of the valiant people of the area and a wise political and diplomatic decision in reiterating the historical reality that, the area is a part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir and its ultimate dispensation has to be in accordance with the UN resolutions within the spirit of Art 257 of the Constitution of Pakistan. But, providing for appointment of governor by president of Pakistan and designating the elected chief executive as chief minister like all other provinces of Pakistan and India, and unlike AJK, creates misperceptions which militate against the spirit of keeping it bracketed with Kashmir dispute.

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showexclusives.php?subaction=showfull&id=1253630244&archive=&start_from=&ucat=15&var1news=value1news

“The autonomy delusion of Gilgit – Baltistan,”

Pakistan Times, September 23, 2009

The much awaited package of structural adjustment reforms was unveiled by the prime minister of Pakistan, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, after a cabinet meeting on September 23. Despite of high claims of granting internal autonomy, a governor, to be appointed by the president, and the prime minister, himself, have been made the supreme authorities. The Gilgit – Baltistan Council would be chaired by the prime minister, who will not be elected by votes of the people of Gilgit – Baltistan, while an un-elected governor, to be appointed by the president, would act as vice – chairman of the council. This arrangement is being seen as a major ploy to control the elected representatives of Gilgit – Baltistan. It is for the very first time, in history of the country, that a

servicing federal minister has been appointed governor of a political entity within Pakistan.

<http://www.pak-times.com/2009/09/23/the-autonomy-delusion-of-gilgit-baltistan/>

Tariq Naqash, “Reconstitution of AJK judiciary demanded,”

Dawn, September 19, 2009

MUZAFFARABAD: The president of the ruling faction of Muslim Conference (MC-F) Raja Farooq Haider on September 18 demanded of the chairman Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council (Prime Minister of Pakistan) to dissolve and reconstitute the superior judiciary in AJK which he alleged was overstepping its authority and role.

“The judiciary is supposed to check the other two organs of the state - executive and legislature - and do not trespass into their jurisdiction but unfortunately the situation has been other way round in AJK. Here the judiciary has assumed the role of the other two organs as well,” he said at a press conference in Muzaffarabad.

<http://globalpoliticsnews.com/?p=435>

“PH UK decides to challenge Gilgit-Baltistan constitutional package”

Non-Governmental Organizations Alliance for Protection of Human Rights United Kingdom (NAPHR UK) and Jammu Kashmir Council for Human Rights have rejected the Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order 2009. Meanwhile the Alliance for the Protection of Human Rights Organizations has decided to challenge the said act in the courts of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

<http://www.sananews.com.pk/english/2009/09/17/ph-uk-decides-to-challenge-gilgit-baltistan-constititioonal-package/>

“Kashmir stance not to be affected by Gilgit-Baltistan autonomy: Gilani,”

Associated Press of Pakistan, September 16, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on September 16 said the grant of internal autonomy to Gilgit-Baltistan would not have any impact on Pakistan’s stance on the Kashmir dispute.

Addressing an Iftar reception at the PM House, the Prime Minister dismissed apprehensions that autonomy to country’s Northern Areas would compromise country’s stance on Kashmir. “I categorically announce that this decision of the government would have no negative impact on the Kashmir issue.” He said the provision of internal autonomy to Gilgit Baltistan was fulfillment of government’s promise made with the people of the area.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=86068&Itemid=1

“Gilgit-Baltistan package regressive: PML-Q leader,”

The News, September 17, 2009

ISLAMABAD: PML-Q legislator Marvi Memon on September 16 raised questions about the federal government’s Gilgit-Baltistan package, alleging the package was “regressive” rather than progressive and had no constitutional cover. Addressing a press conference here at the PML House, MNA Marvi Memon dubbed the appointment of Minister for Information and Broadcasting Qamar Zaman Kaira as the Acting Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan a huge question mark over the sincerity of the government to give autonomy to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=198957>

Iftikhar Gilani, “India lodges protest over Bunji dam, Gilgit-Baltistan package,”

Daily Times, September 12, 2009

NEW DELHI: India lodged a protest on September 11 against Islamabad granting the self-governance package to Gilgit-Baltistan and plans to build a multi-billion-dollar dam in the area, which Delhi terms ‘disputed territory’. The dam is being built in the Astore district of Gilgit Baltistan with the help of China.

The Indian government “lodged a protest today over the proposed construction of the Bunji Hydroelectric Project in a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir under illegal occupation of Pakistan,” an Indian statement said. Indian Foreign office spokesman Vishnu Prakash said Delhi had protested against Islamabad’s recent ‘Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment

and Self Governance Order –2009’. He claimed the entire Jammu and Kashmir region was an integral part of India by virtue of accession in 1947. “The so called Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order-2009 is yet another cosmetic exercise intended to camouflage Pakistan’s illegal occupation,” he further stated.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C12%5Cstory_12-9-2009_pg7_8

“JI AJK to hold APC today: Turabi,”

Kashmir Watch

MUZAFFARABAD: Abdur Rashid Turabi, Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Jammu and Kashmir Amir, said that the nation rejects Gilgit-Baltistan package and a meeting of all political parties of AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan was being called today on September 11 to devise unanimous strategy over the issue. Talking to delegations of different political parties which called on him following his visit on September 29, JI AJK Amir said that issuance of the package without taking the stakeholders into confidence is an unwise move.

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showheadlines.php?subaction=showfull&id=1252643090&archive=&start_from=&ucat=1&var0news=value0news

“PM approves fortifying of Muzaffarabad dam”

September 12, 2009

The Prime Minister accorded approval for fortifying of Muzaffarabad Dam at a cost of Rs 42 million. He also directed release of funds for the construction of Wapda Model Town in Muzaffarabad. He was talking to Prime Minister of Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan at the PM House on September 11.

<http://www.hipakistan.com/ss/2009/09/12/news/english/pm-approves-muzaffarabad-dam.html#>

“Kaira takes oath as Gilgit-Baltistan governor today,”

Daily Times, September 15, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Qamar Zaman Kaira took oath as the acting governor of Gilgit-Baltistan on September 15,

according to a formal notification for his nomination. The chief judge of the Supreme Appellate Court would administered the oath of office to Kaira.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C15%5Cstory_15-9-2009_pg7_25

“Left out’ Kashmiri leadership pans Pak govt. for Gilgit-Baltistan reforms,”

September 5, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan government’s new administrative reforms for the Northern Areas, Gilgit-Baltistan, have not gone down well within the political leadership of the region. The reforms, which allow autonomy to the region, have been severely criticized by leaders of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), who demanded that all the leaders from Kashmir must be thoroughly consulted before such important decisions are taken.

http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/south-asia/left-out-kashmiri-leadership-pans-pak-govt-for-gilgit-baltistan-reforms_100243079.html#

“Kashmiri leadership briefed on Gilgit-Baltistan issue,”

The News, September 04, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The foreign office briefed Kashmiri leadership on Gilgit-Baltistan issue on September 3. The President of Azad Kashmir Raja Zulqarnain, Prime Minister Sardar Yaqoob, opposition leader, Sardar Atiq Khan, former Prime Minister Sardar Sikandar Hyatt, leaders of Hurriyat Conference and other leaders and officials of Federal ministry for Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas attended the briefing. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi briefed the Kashmiri leadership about reasons for the formation of Gilgit-Baltistan division, its objectives and administrative structure.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=86370>

Shaiq Hussain, “Kashmiris reject NAs autonomy,”

The Nation, September 05, 2009

ISLAMABAD - The Kashmiri leadership on Friday announced their full support to Pakistan’s efforts for

the revival of stalled Indo-Pak peace process, however, demanded their inclusion as well in the resumed dialogue between the nuclear neighbours.

An official said the briefing at the Foreign Office was aimed at taking Kashmiri leaders on board for the ‘Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order 2009’ in the wake of criticism by PML-N leader, Nawaz Sharif and senior Kashmiri leader, Yasin Malik.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/05-Sep-2009/Kashmiris-reject-NAs-autonomy>

Irfan Ghauri, “PML-N decides to form an AJK chapter,”

Daily Times, September 1, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) decided to form its Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) chapter –that would mainly consist of present ruling alliance in the AJK. An AJK delegation, including People’s Muslim League chief, Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry and AJK Legislative Assembly Speaker, Shah Ghulam Qadir held a meeting with PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif to discuss the merger of all groups.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C01%5Cstory_1-9-2009_pg7_33

Economic Developments

Tariq Naqash “AJK finance department defies rules,”

Dawn, September 26, 2009

MUZAFFARABAD: In what many official circles regard as sheer disregard to clear instructions of the federal government as well as treasury rules, the AJK finance department released a tranche of Rs210 million to the Local Government and Rural Development (LG&RD) department under alleged intense pressure by the government in order to allow the department to carry on its practice of advance withdrawal of funds for development activities.

Sources stated that the AJK government had formed a committee in March, with additional chief secretary (development) as its head and secretary finance, secretary LG&RD and accountant general as its members, to look into and submit recommendations about the mode of spending by the LG&RD department.

<http://globalpoliticsnews.com/?p=448>

“Pak to tap Gilgit-Baltistan gems,”

September 23, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is hoping that the precious stones found in Gilgit-Baltistan will help the region get economic stability and the government plans to tap the stones by bringing modern technology and investment. A comprehensive plan was being prepared to bring investment in various sectors and develop the area to bring it at par with other regions in the country. Tourism, mining and hydel-power potential of Gilgit-Baltistan would change the fate of the region and local and foreign investors would be invited and offered incentives.

<http://www.commodityonline.com/news/Pak-to-tap-Gilgit-Baltistan-gems-21339-3-1.html#>

“Banking facilities urged for cross-LoC trade,”

The News, September 13, 2009

SRINAGAR: When trade across the Line of Control (LoC) in disputed Kashmir resumed after gap of nearly 60 years, there was euphoria. Almost a year on, business has soared, touching Rs26.30 crore but many

are disheartened with the “medieval exchange” of goods. Businessmen in Indian held Kashmir insist that goods are being bartered, with no money changing hands and both sides evaluating products solely in terms of their own currencies. “We actually do not know how this trade will continue in the absence of banking and other modern trade facilities. There is no telephonic communication and no squaring up of accounts between us and traders in Muzaffarabad in PoK” a trader stated.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=198123

“Cross-LoC trade gains momentum,”

September 11, 2009

MIRPUR: The cross-LoC trade between AJK and Indian-held Kashmir through Poonch-Rawalakot route picked up momentum after it touched an all time high on Tuesday, September 7 to Rs24.2 million and crossed Rs40 million for the first time in two days (Tuesday and Wednesday) fixed for the weekly trade, official sources stated.

Items worth Rs24.2 million were exchanged under trans-LoC trade through Chakan-Da-Bagh-Tairinote entry point by the traders of both sides of the line of control, the highest figure for a day since the launch of cross-LoC trade on Poonch-Rawalakot route on October 22 last year.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=197733>

Ansar Abbasi, “Rs207bn power project awarded without bids,”

The News, September 16, 2009

ISLAMABAD: In violation of the government’s policy and without going through an open bidding process in mega projects, the government first signed an MoU and then issued a Letter of Interest (LoI) for Rs207 billion (\$2.5 billion) 1,050 MW Kohala hydropower project to a Chinese company. The China International Water & Electric Corporation (CWE) is now seeking an extension in the time for preparing the feasibility study and even waivers from the ECC and the cabinet approval is being sought to give a legal cover to what has been done illegally.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=24556

Syed Fazl-e-Haider, “Chinese shun Pakistan exodus”

QUETTA: China, rather than have its workers in Pakistan join the exodus of foreigners who are quitting the strife-torn country because of security concerns, the dismal state of the economy or both, is increasing its involvement there and planning further projects. The number of Chinese engineers working in Pakistan has surged to 10,000 this year from 3,000 in 2008, working on 120 projects in different sectors of the economy. China is also involved in a 750-kilometer railway linking the two countries, from Havellian to the 4,730-meter-high Khunjerab Pass in Gilgit-Baltistan. Havellian is linked with the rest of the rail network in Pakistan, and the Chinese will lay track within its territory up to Khunjerab.

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KI11Df01.html

“Pak-China soon to initiate work on development project at AJK,”

Associated Press of Pakistan, September 8, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China September 8 agreed to ensure fast track achievement of prerequisites so that the work on the development projects in Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot and Bagh could be initiated without any delay. To ensure swift implementation of AJK urban development projects, a meeting between Chinese Ambassador Luo Zhaohui and ERRA's Deputy Chairman, Lt Gen Sajjad Akram was held here on September 8. It should be noted that two Chinese companies are already assisting ERRA for the completion of Urban Development Programme in three cities of AJK, MoU for which was also signed in February 2009.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=85648&Itemid=2

“JKLF Delegation Meets UK Foreign Office officials,”

September 24, 2009

The Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) delegation led by its head of Diplomatic Affairs, Professor Zafar Khan, made representations to the

UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office-FCO on Gilgit Baltistan issue at a meeting in London JKLF delegation expressed its concern about Pakistan's move to give Gilgit-Baltistan a province like status especially since the region was not part of Pakistan but an integral part of the state of Jammu Kashmir.

<http://newsblaze.com/story/20090924172649zzzz.nb/topstory.html#>

“British Kashmiris smell conspiracy in Gilgit-Baltistan package,”

Kashmir Watch

LONDON: UK based Kashmiri political parties have rejected the ‘Self Governance Order of federal government for the people of Gilgit and Baltistan saying that it will negatively affect Kashmir's struggle for right to self determination. Addressing a press conference in London, Mohammad Ghalib, President All Parties Kashmir International Coordination Committee (APKICC), an alliance of British Kashmiri parties strongly opposed the package. He termed it a conspiracy to annex the area into Pakistan without taking the people of Kashmir into confidence.

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showexclusives.php?subaction=showfull&id=1252023659&archive=&start_from=&ucat=15&var1news=value1news

“Saudi king sends dates for earthquake victims,”

The News, September 15, 2009

ISLAMABAD: King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud sent 50 tons of dates to Pakistan for distribution among the people hit by the October 2005 earthquake. While collecting the cartons, Abdullah Al-Baraq, acting regional director of the Saudi Public Assistance for Pakistan Earthquake Victims (SPAPEV), told reporters that these packets would be distributed among the earthquake victims of the AJK and NWFP. He said that King Abdullah had sent this gift as a goodwill gesture for the earthquake victims.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=198588>

Other Developments

Sajid Chaudhry, “SCO plans to expand telecom structure in AJK, Northern Areas,”

Daily Times, September 25, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Special Communication Organization (SCO) plans to expand its telecommunication infrastructure in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan to increase access to the telecommunication services for government departments as well as general public. The three projects are expansion of existing GSM communication system in Northern Areas, laying of Optical Fiber Cable to connect remote locations of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Northern Areas and re-location of already laid SCO’s telecom assets due to up-gradation of Karakoram Highway from Rawlakot to Khunjab.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C25%5Cstory_25-9-2009_pg5_15

“78 development Projects launched in Astore district of Gilgit-Balistan,”

*Associated Press of Pakistan
September 26, 2009*

ASTORE: Executive Engineer, PWD, District Astore, Amir Hussain said that some 78 developmental projects worth millions of rupees have been launched in upper regions of district Astore to bring this backward area at par with rest of developed areas of the country. He also noted that the accelerated pace of development is undertaken at the behest of the federal government, which is taking keen interest in the development of Gilgit-Balistan. Amir Hussain said that these development projects include five projects of tourism, 20 projects of transport, 21 projects of PPH, four projects of Irrigations departments while 22 projects of education and Health sectors adding the work on these projects are in full swing.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=86618&Itemid=2

(Other Developments continued after Abbreviations)

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
FBR	Federal Board of Revenue
GBDA	Gilgit-Baltistan Democratic Alliance
GBUM	Gilgit Baltistan United Movement
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
JIAJK	Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Jammu & Kashmir
KAC	Kashmiri American Council
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

“BISP Chairperson Farzana Raja Said National Poverty Survey Soon”

ISLAMABAD: National Poverty Survey’ under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) would be carried out soon to ascertain the percentage of poor in the country. Chairperson BISP, Farzana Raja noted that the pilot project of poverty survey initiated in 16 poorest districts of all the provinces including Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan has been completed. The national survey will be initiated soon to identify more deserving families and will be completed by June 2010, she stated.

<http://www.apakistannews.com/bisp-chairperson-farzana-raja-said-national-poverty-survey-soon-137528#>

Shabbir Mir, “Dying Shina language finds a saviour, after all,”

Rising Kashmir, September 26, 2009

GILGIT: The Karakorum International University (KIU) has stepped in to rescue Gilgit-Baltistan’s major dialect - Shina - from extinction. Shina, the dominant language being spoken by approximately 60 percent people of this region, and also spoken in parts of Jammu & Kashmir, is facing danger of extinction because of lack of patronage by the government and the civil society’s insufficient contribution in the erstwhile Northern Areas, where a package of political reforms unveiled recently by the Prime Minister upgraded its status.

http://www.risingkashmir.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16548&Itemid=1

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir-An Overview

Pakistan occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoK) is constitutionally an integral part of the Indian Union and remains under Pakistani occupation since 1947, when Pakistan's Army engineered a tribal invasion and took control of more than 114,500 square kilometers of J&K. In 1949, the leaders of AJK Muslim Conference were forced to hand over Gilgit Baltistan Regions to the Pakistani federal government through the 'Karachi Agreement'. Since then Gilgit & Baltistan are ruled directly from Islamabad. Again in 1963, Pakistan ceded Trans-Karakoram Tract including a segment of Baltistan Region known as 'Shaksgam' and part of Gilgit Region known as 'Raskam' to China. Further, Chitral and parts of Chilas called Shinaki Kohistan, which constituted parts of Jammu & Kashmir before its partition in 1947, were also merged into the NWFP of Pakistan in 1970 and 1955 respectively.

Total Area of PoK (under the current form): 85,793 sq. km

Administrative Divisions: Two, namely Mirpur-Muzaffarabad and Gilgit & Baltistan; referred to as Azad Jammu & Kashmir or AJK, and the 'Northern Areas' respectively by the government of Pakistan

Area ceded to China by Pakistan: 5,800 sq kilometers

AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR (AJK)

After the partition of Jammu & Kashmir, the Muzaffarabad district of Kashmir province, and Mirpur and parts of Poonch districts of Jammu province went into Pakistani occupation. Pakistan amalgamated these districts together and created the so-called AJK. AJK is envisaged as an autonomous region by Pakistan. The government of AJK is considered as a parallel government, which was established to challenge the legitimacy of the J&K government in Srinagar. Despite the fact that AJK is neither a country nor a province of Pakistan, it has its own President, a Prime Minister, a Supreme Court, national anthem and a flag. These structures and the designations are only titular in nature and real authority lies with the federal government of Pakistan. Significant matters such as defence, supposed 'foreign policy',

rehabilitation of refugees and the financial control have been carefully placed under the discretion of the political establishment of Pakistan. As of today, the parts of Kashmir province under PoK is divided into three districts of Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Neelum, while the parts of Jammu province under PoK is divided into five districts namely Poonch/Rawalakot, Sudhnati/Pallandari, Bhimber, Kotli and Mirpur.

Area: 13,297 square km

Jammu (Mirpur Division) comprising of 5 districts: Bhimber, Kotli, Mirpur, Sudhnati/Pallandari and Rawalakot/Poonch

Kashmir (Muzaffarabad Division) comprises of 3 districts: Bagh, Muzaffarabad and Neelum

Population: 2.973 million (1998 population census) Male, 1.850 million Female, 1.832 million)

Capital: Muzaffarabad

President: Raja Zulqarnain Khan

Prime Minister: Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan

“Azad Jammu and Kashmir” Council: Total 12 members- 6 each representing governments of AJK and Pakistan. The AJK Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Legislative Assembly: Total seats are 49, of which 29 are directly elected from the AJK, 11 are elected from Pakistan under the provision for the 'Kashmiri refugees', whereas rest of the 8 seats are reserved for females, overseas Kashmiris and the technocrats.

Ethnic Groups: Gujjars, Jats, Mughal, Rajputs, Sudhan, Awan, Qureshi, Pashtuns, Shins, Baltis etc.

Religious Groups: Sunni, Ahlehadith, Shia, Nurbakhshi, Christians, Qadianis, Hindus

Languages: Punjabi, Hindko, Pahari, Kashmiri, Balti, Puriki, Shina

Political Groups: United Jammu and Kashmir Peoples' National Party, AJK Muslim Conference, International Kashmir Alliance, JK National Party, Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (Amanullah), Peoples United Action Committee, All Parties National Alliance (APNA)

GILGIT BALTISTAN

Gilgit Baltistan was initially referred to by the government of Pakistan as the Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA). It is the northernmost political entity within the Pakistan occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoK) and is under direct control of the Islamabad government. The area, after separation of Chitral and Shinaki Kohistan, is still five and half times bigger to that of AJK. The status of the *Gilgit Baltistan* is not defined in the successive constitutions of Pakistan. Pakistan accepts *Gilgit Baltistan* as part of the Princely State of Jammu & Kashmir, however, does not consider it as part of AJK. Due to a direct control imposed from Islamabad, the locals still await basic political and judicial rights. For instance, they do not have the right to cast vote and lack representation in the National Assembly and the Senate of Pakistan. Further, they cannot access the provincial high courts as well as the Supreme Court of Pakistan for justice. The Judicial Commissioner exercises judicial powers in *Gilgit Baltistan* who is a political figure nominated by the Minister for Kashmir and Northern Areas Affairs. The Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA) is a political institution which lacks power to legislate and is headed by the Minister for Kashmir and Northern Areas Affairs, who is currently a Member of the National Assembly elected from the Gujrat district of Punjab province.

Area: 72,496 km

Population: 870,347 (1998 population census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: six

Baltistan Region is divided into Ganche and Skardu districts

Gilgit Region is divided into Astore, Diamer, Ghizar and Gilgit districts

Ethnic Groups: Shin, Balti, Puriki, Ladakhi, Wakhi, Yashkun, Tibetan, Mongol, Mon, Pashtun, Khowar, Dom, Gujjar and Kashmiri

Religious Groups: Shia (Twelvers), Nurbakhshi (Twelvers), Ismaili, Sunni, and Ahlehadith

Languages: Shina, Balti, Wakhi, Khowar, Gujjari, Burushaski, Puriki, Kashmiri, Pashto

Legislature: Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA) Total 30 seats, of which 24 are directly elected and 6 female members are selected by NALA members.

Chairman NALA: Qamar Zaman Kaira

Chief Executive NALA: NALA was dissolved on July 25, 2009 before it could complete its 5-years term, and along with that, advisors to the Chairman including the Chief Executive were sacked. Elections for NALA will now be held in October 2009.

Political Groups: Balwaristan National Front (BNF), Gilgit Baltistan Thinkers Forum, Gilgit Baltistan United Movement (GBUM), Baltistan National Movement, Karakoram National Movement, Gilgit Baltistan Democratic Alliance (GBDA), Gilgit Baltistan National Alliance (GBNA), All Parties National Alliance (APNA)

Literacy rate: 15% male- 3.5% female (World Bank estimates of 1997)

State of Infrastructure: More than two-thirds of the villages lack potable water, electricity, telephone, health units, girls' schools, paved roads, ration depot, and pony tracks.

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.

POK NEWS DIGEST

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