

POK NEWS DIGEST

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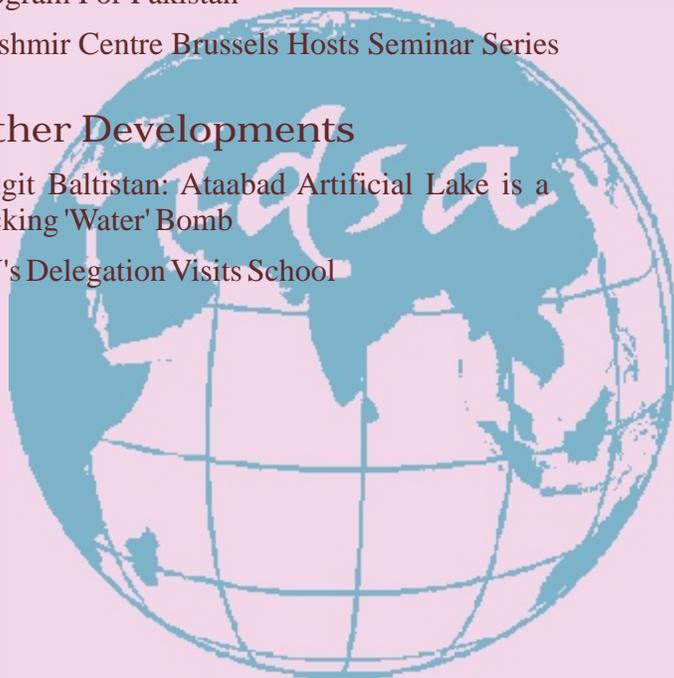
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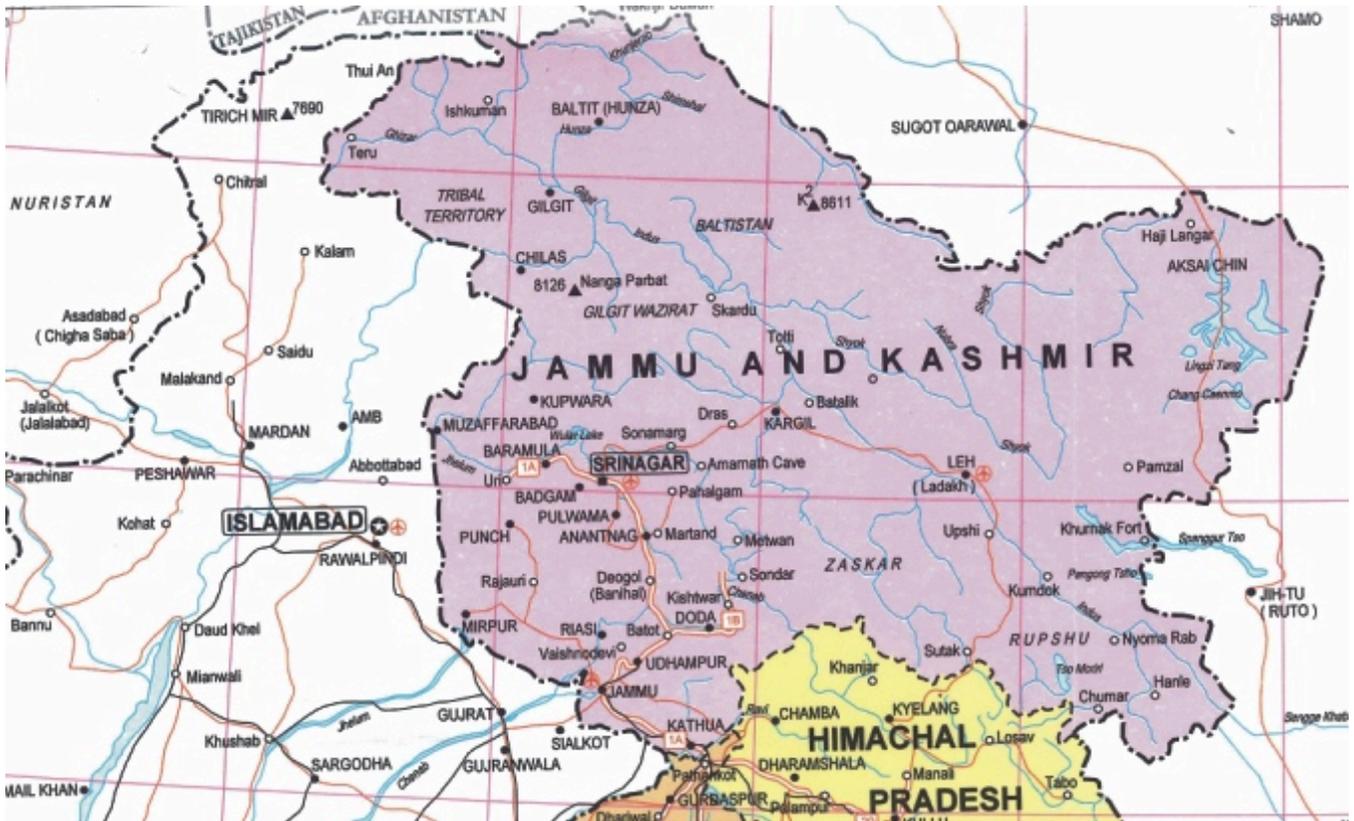
EU's Delegation Visits School



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

Jammu & Kashmir

In this Edition

Political instability marked developments in the so called AJK as incumbent Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider had to make way for Sardar Attique Ahmed in what could be called a complete reversal of fortunes. This was the fourth change in the prime ministerial office in the so called AJK since the last elections in the year 2006, as is suggested in one of the reports included in this issue. It is a welcome sign to see that Pakistani newspapers have carried reports on the vulnerability of the existing political structure in the so called AJK to Islamabad's interference. The report hints how it is essential for office bearers in PoK have to constantly appease the Pakistani government in order to survive in office.

India's long standing claim on PoK seems to have been endorsed by World Bank's decision to refuse to provide funding for the Diamer Bhasha Dam. World Bank's refusal was based on the premise that the status of PoK, where the site of the dam is situated, is disputed.

The Bhasha dam has always been embroiled in controversies for multiple reasons- most significantly the resistance put up by the local population against the construction of the dam. The decision was welcomed greatly by the people of Gilgit Baltistan and also the ethnic groups based in the United States. These nationalist groups have time and again voiced concerns against economic drain of Gilgit Baltistan by Pakistan over the last six decades. The decision of the World Bank has put a big question mark on the Pakistan's continued occupation of Gilgit Baltistan in particular and PoK at large.

In other developments, several lives were claimed by floods which occurred in and around Muzaffarabad after heavy rainfall for days. Other districts in PoK are also reported to have been affected by floods and these include Mirpur, Kotli, Bagh, Rawalkot and Sudhanti.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

'India to continue protest against dam in PoK', Deccan Herald, July 19, 2010

India is likely to continue protesting against the controversial Diamer-Bhasha dam project even as Islamabad is desperately trying to get funds for it from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB). The dam is proposed to be built on the Indus river in the Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. Both international lending agencies are understood to be cagey about the controversial project due to protests by New Delhi. However, Pakistan's Council of Common Interests (CCI), headed by Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, of late has cleared the multi-purpose project.

The project will consist of a huge reservoir for the storage of 6.3 Million Acre Feet of water and two power stations with total installed generation capacity of 4,500 MW. The World Bank and ADB are believed to have asked the Pakistani government to ensure that the project be supported by a political consensus. New Delhi, however, is likely to voice its objections once again to the Diamer-Bhasha project as it is located in Gilgit-Baltistan, a part of the PoK. According to sources in New Delhi, India will continue to assert its stand that the location of the proposed project was in an area which had been under illegal occupation of Pakistan.

<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/82487/india-continue-protest-against-dam.html>

'No-confidence motion submitted against AJK PM', Dawn, July 23, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: Opposition parties in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) submitted a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Raja Farooq Hyder. The motion was submitted in the Assembly Secretariat by AJK Information Minister

Abdul Majid Khan and Chaudhry Abdul Aziz. The opposition nominated Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan for the office of prime minister. A requisition for a session of the legislative assembly was also submitted which means the session must now be held within 14 days. Ten ministers from the legislative assembly had sent their resignations to the chief of the ruling Muslim Conference party, sources confirmed.

<http://dawnnews.tv/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/04-no-confidence-ajk-pm-qs-08>

'Sardar Attique elected AJK's PM unopposed', The News, July 29, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: The Muslim Conference leader Sardar Aatique Ahmed Khan was elected as Leader of the House Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) after he got 39 votes in his support at AJK legislative assembly on July 29. The house caste vote of confidence on Sardar Atique as he secured 39 votes in his favour from the house of 49 members.

Earlier on July 27, no candidate turned up to challenge Sardar Atique for the top position. Following Raja Farooq Haider's resignation as the Prime Minister, nomination papers were to be submitted for the new leader of the House.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=109359>

Ruchika Talwar, 'Pakistan-Obfuscated Kashmir', Indian Express, July 31, 2010

This week saw Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan take over as "PM" of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The area, which Pakistan calls Azad Jammu and Kashmir or AJK, has since its 2006 elections been in a state of political crisis. "Just 30 hours before the vote on a no-confidence motion against PM Raja Farooq Haider, a faction of the ruling Muslim Conference

which moved the motion claimed that 18 of 24 cabinet members had resigned... the AJK Assembly speaker, who is supporting the PM, said he hadn't received any resignation... He called a session of the assembly for a vote. It will be the third time the assembly will vote on a no-confidence motion since its election in 2006... Former PM Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, who had been voted out in January last year, has been nominated again as the Leader of the House. A spokesman for Sardar Attique, who is spearheading the move against the PM (of his own party), claimed to have the support required..."

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/pakistanobfuscated-kashmir/654098/>

Raja Riaz, 'The road to ruling Muzaffarabad passes through Islamabad', Daily Times, July 28, 2010

LAHORE: The stakeholders sitting outside the boundaries of Azad Jammu and Kashmir are always the reason behind making and breaking the governments there and the recent episode of changing the key players in the power corridors of Kashmir is a continuity of this. This can be judged by the statement of former AJK Prime Minister Barrister Sultan Mehmood, who had said, "It's necessary to spend six out of seven days of a week in Islamabad to continue as a primer minister of Kashmir."

A study of the history of Kashmir's politics reveals that the governments in Azad Kashmir have always been dependent on the influential people sitting in the federal capital of Pakistan and every head of the government there has had strong links with Islamabad.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C07%5C28%5Cstory_28-7-2010_pg7_3

Usman Manzoor, 'AJK PM admits meeting ISI chief', Kashmir Watch, July 27, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Raja Farooq Haider, the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, who

resigned on July 26 after failing to gather the support of his one time 'loyal' MPs was the only man in AJK, who took a stand against the former AJK Chief Justice Riaz Akhtar Chaudhry and moved a reference against the CJ which cleansed the AJK judiciary of Musharraf's wrong doings.

Raja Farooq Haider held a two-hour long meeting with General Ahmad Shuja Pasha, Director General Inter-Services Intelligence, and apprised him about the severe consequences of the judgement passed by Justice (R) Riaz Akhtar on March 15, 2010, which declared Azad Jammu and Kashmir as separate country and challenged the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and directed the prime minister of Pakistan not to issue any notification regarding the office of the AJK Chief Justice.

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showajnk.php?subaction=showfull&id=1280259253&archive=&start_from=&ucat=18&var1news=value1news

Aziz Ali Dad, 'Governance in Gilgit-Baltistan', The News, July 29, 2010

The region of Gilgit-Baltistan has remained always an anomaly in the political system of Pakistan. There are several factors that contributed to its status being kept in constitutional limbo. Foremost among these is the Kashmir dispute, as well as regional geopolitics at large. Various governments in Pakistan have tried to incorporate Gilgit-Baltistan into the country's political structure.

The announcement of the Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-governance Order by the government last year was the latest attempt by the state to bring the region into Pakistan's political mainstream. Under the current dispensation a newly elected assembly has elected a chief minister and a governor has been appointed by the federal government. It is for the first time that the region enjoys its own setup with an empowered legislature. People have high expectations regarding the delivery of results from the elected members Gilgit-

Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA).

Empowerment entails great responsibility. It is the responsibility of the members of the GBLA to ensure development in the area by using their powers effectively. Too much dependence on the bureaucracy and the central government will render futile all the exercise involved in setting up the new system: the election and the establishment of new institutions, as well as the legislation the assembly will produce.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=253462>

Nisar Ahmed Thokar, 'Haider vows to safeguard rights of people', July 29, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The outgoing prime minister of AJK, Raja Farooq Haider Khan vowed to carry forward his mission to protect rights of the people of the region besides pursuing the cause of good-governance and eradicating the menace of corruption. Khan said this while addressing the people at Kohala and Chattar area. He said that there was a dire need to have a strong political party in the region that could safeguard the rights of the people.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/Jul/29/haider-vows-to-safeguard-rights-of-people-46.asp>

Engineer Ali Rinchen, 'Pakistan exploiting Gilgit-Baltistan', The Pioneer, July 26, 2010

This year marks the 63rd anniversary of Pakistan's occupation. The story of Gilgit-Baltistan is that of a free nation which passed under Pakistani occupation soon after its people failed to maintain their control over its land and resources. In the fall of 1947, just a few weeks after its soldiers revolted against the Dogras and ousted forces loyal to the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir, the region was declared a free republic. Fearing reprisal from the Dogra forces, the local military command asked Pakistan to provide diplomatic support. Pakistan did not waste much time advancing its political agenda in the region. Within a few weeks, it entered

its forces and established direct control over Gilgit-Baltistan. It is the strategic location of the region, nestled between the four nations of Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and India, besides its unique natural resources that make it valuable.

Gilgit-Baltistan has a history of thousands of years of exploitation of its ravines as battlefields by colonial and imperial forces. After 63 years of Pakistani presence, the position is no different. The province has become a military garrison and staging post for militants and Pakistani secret service agents. Today, there is one Pakistani soldier for every 25 local habitants.

http://groups.google.com/group/soc.culture.indian/browse_thread/thread/4f27ef88edd066eb?pli=1

'Crisis in AJK', The Nation, July 28, 2010

The resignation of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider was meant to counter the no-confidence motion that had been moved against him, and was the third such motion to be moved in the current House, which was elected in 2006. Raja Farooq himself had taken office after the ouster of Sardar Atiqur Rehman in the last motion. Sardar Atique had been named in the no-confidence motion to come back as Prime Minister and now again has been elected unopposed. The resignation also was an admission that the motion would succeed. Raja Farooq took the decision after being in touch with PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif. Raja Farooq, being a member of the Muslim Conference like Sardar Attique, this was perhaps inevitable.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Opinions/Editorials/28-Jul-2010/Crisis-in-AJK>

'Door of education closing on GB', Weekly Baang Karachi, July 27 -Aug 2, 2010

GILGIT: Despite passage of one year not even five per cent of the new education policy has been implemented in Gilgit-Baltistan. During the last few decades billions of rupees have been shown as allocated for 'promotion' of education but instead of

any turnaround the standard of educational institutions has been on the decline. Revelations of corruption, malpractices and irregularities in the education department have regularly been reported by the local media but the government has so far miserably failed to take any preventive measures or introduce reforms in the sector. If one analyzes the number of schools and that of teachers in the educational institutions, a very grim picture of the future of the nation comes to the fore. The date also exposes government's tall claims which it has been making for the last many decades about provision of all facilities including the teaching staff in schools and colleges of the region. According to the latest figures, in the Gilgit district the number of boys' primary schools is 1,600 which have only 143 teachers while there are 6,952 primary schools for girls and the number of their teachers is 230.

http://weeklybaang.blogspot.com/2010/07/weekly-baang-karachi-volume-03-issue-22_26.html

'G-B officials' degrees to be sent for verification: Mehdi Shah', The Tribune

GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Mehdi Shah stated that the degrees of all government officials serving in various departments in Gilgit-Baltistan would be sent for verification. He, however, played down the idea of verifying G-B legislative assembly members' degrees saying that they had not contested elections on the basis of their degrees.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/31500/g-b-officials%e2%80%99-degrees-to-be-sent-for-verification-mehdi-shah/>

Irfan Ghauri, 'AJK PM resigns, blames federal govt', Daily Times, July 27, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan on July 26 tendered his resignation, the third AJK PM to do so since 2006. The AJK president has accepted the resignation and summoned the AJK Legislative Assembly's session on July 29 to elect a new leader of the House. Haider announced his resignation

ahead of the crucial vote on a no-confidence motion that was moved by Muslim Conference (MC) President Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, a contender for the top slot.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C07%5C27%5Cstory_27-7-2010_pg1_6

Amir Wasim, 'Political wrangling continues in AJK', Dawn, July 26, 2010

ISLAMABAD: A political crisis in Azad Jammu and Kashmir continued and just 30 hours before the vote on a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider took place, a faction of the ruling Muslim Conference which moved the motion claimed that 18 of 24 cabinet members had resigned and deserted the premier. However, AJK Assembly Speaker Shah Ghulam Qadir, who is supporting the prime minister, stated he had not received any resignation. The no-confidence motion was submitted by 11 members on July 23 and the speaker called a session of the AJK Legislative Assembly on July 27 for a vote. This was the third time the assembly will vote on a no-confidence motion since its election in 2006 giving the people of Azad Kashmir their fourth prime minister in as many years.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/16-political-wrangling-continues-in-ajk-670-hs-07>

Nademm Ahmed Siddiqui, 'Global Kashmir Peace Conference on 29th', Daily Mail, July 25, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The Eleventh International Kashmir Peace Conference was held on July 29 & 30, 2010 on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. The primary objective of this conference was to explore various possibilities to set a stage for the settlement of the Kashmir dispute. Speakers represented Kashmir on both sides of the LoC; from India, Pakistan and included eminent personalities with an interest in this explosive global concern.

<http://dailymailnews.com/0710/25/CityPage/index.php?id=3>

'Federal govt not intervening in AJK' internal affairs, says Sardar Qamar u Zaman'

MUZAFFARABAD: Former Opposition leader Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly and senior leader of Peoples Party AJK Sardar Qamar u Zaman Khan refuted all the accusations of Muslim Conference Ministers' of federal government intervention during no-confidence move.

Talking to media persons at Opposition Chamber of AJK assembly before his departure to Islamabad, he said that it is the right of the assembly members to bring any change democratically in the assembly. Earlier Muslim Conference (MC) had brought changes and now once again MC would bring changes.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=166333>

B. Raman, 'Pakistan as China's force-multiplier against India', July 11, 2010

Any Indian expectation that as part of the assurance of Prime Minister Wen of caring for India's core interests and major concerns, China would reverse its policy of helping Pakistan in the development of its railway and road infrastructure in the Gilgit-Baltistan area bordering Xinjiang, which de jure is part of India's Jammu and Kashmir, and developing the hydro-electric potential in the Gilgit-Baltistan area was belied when the two countries announced the formal signing of more agreements relating to Gilgit-Baltistan during Mr.Zardari's stay in Beijing. Under Memoranda of Understanding signed by officials of the two Governments during the visit, China will build the 165-km long Jaglot-Skardu road and the 135-km long Thakot-Sazin road. The projects would cost Pakistani Rs 45 billion with 15 per cent financing by Pakistan and 85 per cent by China. Under another MoU to be jointly executed by Chinese company Datang and Norwegian company EBT, 500 MW electricity would be produced through wind power. It is not known

whether this will also be in the Gilgit-Baltistan area.

<http://www.srilankaguardian.org/2010/07/pakistan-as-chinas-force-multiplier.html>

Rashid Ahmad Khan, 'New paradigm of Pak-China relations', Daily Times, July 23, 2010

China-Pakistan trade registered a substantial increase but it is largely in the form of Chinese exports. Both China and Pakistan are keen to correct this imbalance of trade by encouraging the Pakistani business community to explore the Chinese market.

The decision to build two highways with the help of China in Gilgit-Baltistan indicates that the Gilgit-Baltistan region is going to play a key role in promoting regional connectivity and tourism between Pakistan and China due to its geo-strategic location. The region has a common border with the Chinese province of Xinjiang and is linked to Central Asia through Wakhan a land strip with a width of only 10 miles. The Karakoram Highway, the main commercial highway between China and Pakistan, passes through Gilgit-Baltistan and is being upgraded at a cost of \$ 500 million. On his visit to Gilgit-Baltistan last year, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani announced a plan to start a direct PIA flight between Gilgit and Kathmandu. Once materialised, foreign tourists will be able to come directly from Nepal to Gilgit. It has the potential to make Gilgit-Baltistan a hub of business and tourist activities in a region constituting Gilgit-Baltistan, Central Asia, Kashmir, Ladakh and Nepal.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C07%5C23%5Cstory_23-7-2010_pg3_4

'Chinese proposal for Attabad lake accepted by govt', Dawn, July 22, 2010

ISLAMABAD: After facing considerable criticism over inundation of populated areas by the swelling Attabad lake in Gilgit-Baltistan, the government

has finally agreed to a strategy put forth by Chinese government to overcome the problem in future.

The strategy was discussed at a high-level meeting at the Presidency which was presided over by President Asif Ali Zardari and attended by Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and Chief of Army Staff Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kayani. Sources in the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said that Chinese experts had visited Attabad lake a few months ago when it started swelling and suggested several steps to avoid flooding, including controlled blasting.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/chinese-proposal-for-attabad-lake-accepted-by-govt-270>

'FWO to widen Hunza spillway: GB speaker', The News, July 22, 2010

GILGIT: Dismissing reports that a Chinese company has been awarded a contract to widen the spillway of the landslide lake at Hunza, Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan assembly Wazir Baig noted on July 20 that the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) will do the task of draining the lake.

“The task of widening of the spillway is not being given to China. FWO will do it,” Baig stated. For the past two days there had been rumours in Gilgit that a Chinese company has been contracted to widen the spillway as the attempts made by FWO earlier to widen the spillway remained inconclusive. If the lake is drained, about 25,000 people evacuated from their villages downstream will return to their houses.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=252226

'CCI Approves Diamer-Bhasha Dam: While Royalties Dispute Between Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remains unclear'

Pakistan's power crisis is growing by the day and urgent steps are required to address the problem. In

this connection it is heartening to learn that the Diamer-Bhasha dam project has finally been approved by the Council of Common Interests, possibly paving the way for assistance from foreign donors. But what is equally if not more important here is that the dam was given the green light through consensus with all stakeholders on board.

Such cooperation is of vital significance in a country where provinces have historically viewed other federating units with distrust and even hostility. It is also promising that efforts are under way to make the CCI a genuinely functional body that will meet at least once every three months and whose area of purview has been widened. We hope the administration will deliver on its pledge to hold regular CCI meetings so that pending projects and other inter-provincial issues can be expedited in harmonious fashion.

<http://www.k2times.com/?p=502>

'Militants to step up J&K ops', Deccan Chronicle, July 22, 2010

NEW DELHI: Latest inputs with the Central intelligence agencies confirm that commanders of several militant outfits held a meeting in the second week of July at Muzaffarabad where it was decided to maximise infiltration of militants into Indian Territory to revive militancy in Jammu and Kashmir and in other parts of the country. Sources stated that the meeting was chaired by Syed Salahuddin, chief of Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), and was attended by area commanders, as well as launching commanders, of Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT), HM and Al-Badar. Sources added that more than 30 persons including some officials of the ISI were also present in the meeting.

“The meeting deliberated on the issue of maximising infiltration of militants into the Indian territory in order to revive the militancy in J&K and other parts of the country. It was also decided in the meeting that the fresh infiltration bids will start

from the last week of July”, sources further added.

<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/national/militants-step-jk-ops-404>

'BNF Condemns foreign forces activities for precious mines in Gilgit Baltistan', July 16, 2010

In Choporsan, Gojal, Hunza of Gilgit, 80 Sq Kilo area of mine which is being used in space technology has been given to China by Pakistan. In Shimshal of Hunza near China border (this is the area where 2500 Sq Miles area has already been ceded to China by Pakistan in 1963 by violating UNCIP resolution.). Pakistani government has given about 1200 sq km (30% total area) leased out for Pakistani forces. On high pasture of Chhalt Nagar a strayed missile has hit Chinese work mining area recently. In Gandai of Yasen, 4000 blasts were done by Chinese Military Engineers in 2008, as result glacier burst and local people climbed up the mountain and kicked out Chinese. Pakistani forces arrested local people, tortured and put 22 local leaders behind bars.

<http://www.balawaristan.net/index.php/Latest-news/bnf-condemns-foreign-forces-activities-for-precious-mines-in-gilgit-baltistan.html>

'Zardari asks for early completion of projects in Azad Kashmir', Associated Press of Pakistan, July 20, 2010

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has asked the federal government to take necessary steps on priority for completion of ongoing projects in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. This he directed during his meeting with the delegation from AJK comprising President AJK Raja Zulqarnain Khan, Prime Minister Raja Muhammad Farooq Khan at Aiwan-e-Sadr on July 20. Ms. Naheed Tariq, Minister for Population Welfare AJK, President PPP AJK Abdul Majeed Chaudhary, former Prime Minister Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan were also accompanying the President and PMAJK.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content

&task=view&id=109855&Itemid=2

'CCI minus GB decides Diamir dam's construction', Pamir Times, July 19, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The Council of Common Interest (CCI) discussed and 'approved' construction of the Diamir Bhasha Dam in Diamir district of Gilgit Baltistan region. Chief ministers of the four provinces of Pakistan participated in the meeting but elected leader of the region where the proposed dam is to be built was not invited to attend the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Gilani. Construction of the dam has hit a snag due to World Bank's refusal to provide funds.

<http://pamirtimes.net/2010/07/19/cci-minus-gb-decides-diamir-dams-fate/>

'Attabad: out of sight, out of mind', The Tribune

The breathless reporting out of Attabad, a picturesque village perched on the mountains in Hunza valley of the Gilgit-Baltistan region, has almost stopped. A lake formed as a result of a massive earthquake more than six months ago has become part of the local landscape, at least for another month or more. And over 25,000 villagers, uprooted by this monstrous lake from their homes, are losing patience now. “Their women are developing psychological problems,” admits Wazir Baig, speaker of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly. Frustrated, they even threatened to commit suicide en masse. Perhaps this is not enough to move the authorities busy pursuing their corruption cases, outwitting their rivals, defending their forged educational certificates and squandering taxpayers' money to buy loyalties of lawyers.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/28768/attabad-out-of-sight-out-of-mind/>

'Zardari asks G-B CM to focus on communications development', Daily Times, July 14, 2010

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on July

13 asked Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Chief Minister Syed Mehdi Shah to pay special attention towards developing the communications network, which he said are crucial for the long-term prosperity of the people of the region. The president made these comments when the G-B CM called on Zardari at the President's House. During the meeting, matters relating to the rehabilitation of the Attaabad lake victims, development projects, provision of funds for development projects, extension of the People's Works Programme to G-B, creation of a tax-free zone, and the extension of the Women's Bank to Gilgit-Baltistan were discussed at length.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C07%5C14%5Cstory_14-7-2010_pg7_28

'Chitral to be linked to China after construction of Chitral-Gilgit Road', Business Recorder, July 13, 2010

The government will link Chitral with time-tested friend China by constructing Chitral-Gilgit Road that would make the northern districts of Pakistan a hub of economic investment, said Federal Minister for Communication Arbab Alamgir Khan on July 12.

<http://www.brecorder.com/inde.php?id=1079902>

Roshan Mughal, 'Hizb takes out protest rally in Muzaffarabad', July 13, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: Members of Hizbul Mujahideen on July 12 took out a protest rally against human rights violations by troopers in Kashmir. Dozens of Hizb activists and supporters carrying green and black flags of Hizbul Mujahideen on motorbikes passed through roads of PaK capital. This was the first ever rally by Hizbul Mujahideen after former president General Parvez Musharraf banned the activities of militant outfits in 2003. "The rally was organized on the call of senior APHC leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani," noted Uzair Ghazali, one of the organizers of the rally.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/Jul/13/hizb-takes-out-protest-rally-in-muzaffarabad-37.asp>

Noor Aftab, 'Kashmir Dialogue', The News, July 12, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The participants of the dialogue session on "Chinars' Old Leaves are Falling: Fresh Saplings in the 1st Citizens' Dialogue on Kashmir" welcomed the resumption of the Pakistan-India dialogue process and hoped that it would help resolve conflicting issues between the two nuclear states.

The dialogue session was jointly organized here by the Centre for Peace, Development and Reforms (CPDR) and the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit (FNF) with the support of the European Union. The participants including civil society activists, politicians, legislators, journalists, former government officials from Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan and refugees settled in Pakistan held an extensive and rigorous debate regarding the upcoming India-Pakistan foreign ministers' meeting to be held on July 15 to express their support and persistent dedication towards peace process in the region.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=250236>

'President China visit to usher new era of friendship', Associated Press of Pakistan, July 10, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rehman Malik has said that President Asif Ali Zardari's visit to China will open up new era of friendship between two time tested friendly countries. Addressing media after meeting with Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah, the minister stated, Khanjrab check post on Pak-China border has been upgraded to facilitate businessman and tourists without any hurdle. He said that elected democratic government attaches great importance to

development of Gilgit Baltistan and would utilize all available resources.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=108902&Itemid=2%3C/link%3E%3Cguid%20isPermaLink=

Ananth Krishnan, 'China signs \$525-million deal to help Pakistan highway projects in PoK', The Hindu, July 10, 2010

The Chinese government on July 6 signed a \$525-million deal to help Pakistan build two highways in the disputed Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) region. China has agreed to build a 165-km-long highway between Jaglot and Skardu, and a 135-km highway between Thakot and Sazin in the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan region near Pakistan's border with China, according to a Memorandum of Understanding signed here during the visit of President Asif Ali Zardari. The official Associated Press of Pakistan reported that the projects would cost Pakistan Rs.45 billion, or \$525 million. China has agreed to bear 85 per cent of the cost.

Rail link plans: During Mr. Zardari's visit, the two countries have also agreed to accelerate plans to build a rail line from China's far western Xinjiang autonomous region to Havelian, also through the Gilgit-Baltistan region. The plans have been discussed for almost a decade, but have made little headway since 2004, when a pre-feasibility study was conducted. Asked about the progress in discussions over the rail link, Mr. Zardari told China's Xinhua news agency that "the concept had been accepted," but did not give any further detail.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article507853.ece>

'China to build two highways in Gilgit-Baltistan', Dawn, July 9, 2010

BEIJING: China will build two highways in Gilgit-Baltistan at an estimated cost of Rs 45 billion 85 per cent of the amount will be borne by China and the rest by Pakistan. One of the highways, having a

proposed length of 165 kilometres, will link Skardu with Jaglot and the other, 135kms long, will link Thakot and Sazin.

The highway project was the highlight of four memorandums of understanding signed between the two countries on July 9. The other MOUs pertained to health and power generation sectors. The MoUs were signed after President Asif Zardari's speech at the Pak-China Economic Cooperation Forum. The MOU on the energy sector envisaged generation of 500 megawatt through wind power. The wind turbines will be set up along the coastal areas of Sindh at a cost of one billion dollars.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/china-to-build-two-highways-in-gilgitbaltistan-070>

Ishfaq Tantry, 'On Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road mobs replace police check posts', Rising Kashmir, July 2, 2010

BARAMULLA: Any normal day and a ride on Srinagar-Baramulla highway is full of joy, with sky-kissing poplars and vast unending paddy fields and apple orchards dotting both sides of the scenic road mesmerising the passengers. But the scenario seems to have changed, especially during the past two weeks of heightened tensions in the region and elsewhere in the Valley. Before embarking on a journey on the road leading to North Kashmir, one must bear two things in mind. Either take the ride on this road early mornings or towards late evening. And if one is a policeman, he better hide his identity while travelling on Srinagar-Muzaffarabad Road, as it is now referred to as.

http://www.risingkashmir.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=24760&Itemid=55

Pranab Dhal Samanta, 'GPS records, CD transcript matches boost India's case', July 6, 2010

Pakistan's interim chargesheet on the Mumbai

attacks, submitted to the court last September, for the first time clearly indicts the Lashkar-e-Toiba for carrying out the 26/11 terror attack against India. The interim chargesheet states that the coordinates provided in the GPS information passed on by India correlated with four locations: the boat Al Fouz docked at Karachi fish harbour, which has now been seized, accused crew member residence, LeT training camps at Yousaf Goth and Mirpur Sakro, and boats docked at the creek.

Two critical pieces of information on which there was considerable doubt have been independently corroborated by the Pakistani investigators first, that one of the Thuraya numbers, 881655526412, that was recovered from the Mumbai scene and used by the terrorists was issued in Saudi Arabia to a Pakistani national Jamil Ahmed; and second, the famous 'Kharak Singh' client identity on which VoIP accounts were opened through US-based company Callphonex, was created on October 10, 2008 from Karachi and operated from there as well as Muzaffarabad (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir).

<http://www.expressindia.com/latest-news/GPS-records--CD-transcript-matches-boost-India-s-case/642599/>

'Pak dismisses India's concern over Pak-China rail link in PoK', July 8, 2010

ISLAMABAD: PTI Pakistan dismissed India's concern over a proposed Pakistan-China rail link through the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan region in PoK, saying New Delhi has "no locus standi" in the matter. Abdul Basit, the Pakistani foreign office spokesman, dismissed India's objections to the Pakistan-China proposed rail link through the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan region in the Karakoram ranges. Amid concerns voiced by India over the rail link through the disputed Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK), he noted New Delhi has "no locus standi" in the matter and that its objections are "uncalled for and irrelevant". The rail link is a matter of concern to India as it passes through some of the disputed areas forming part of PoK.

http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report_pak-dismisses-india-s-concern-over-pak-china-rail-link-in-pok_1407148

Rauf Klasra, 'JK PM advises Pakistan to give up 'Kashmir first' policy', The News, July 6, 2010

ISLAMABAD: In a major policy shift, the AJK Prime Minister, Raja Farooq Haider, advised Pakistan not to link the ongoing negotiations with India with the resolution of the Kashmir dispute and instead first resolve the small irritants and controversial issues before finally sorting out the core issue of Kashmir.

He also backed the proposal to give the status of 'Most Favourite Nation' (MFN) to India and allow New Delhi to use Pakistani soil as a transit route for trade purposes. India had already given MFN status to Pakistan but Islamabad never reciprocated this gesture on the ground that unless Kashmir was resolved, it would not confer this status on New Delhi.

The AJK prime minister also strongly backed the inclusion of India in the Pak-Iran gas project and transit facility for India to trade with Afghanistan. Raja Farooq repeatedly explained that he was giving this advice because he believed that this was not the right time for Pakistan to press for a Kashmir settlement. At the moment, he said, Pakistan was facing a formidable security challenge from the militants and was not in a position to effectively fight the case of Kashmir at this important juncture of history.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=29854

'Chinese rail plan in PoK worries India', Economic Times, July 8, 2010

NEW DELHI: India has expressed concern over China's plans to build a rail link through the Karakoram ranges in Pakistan. The trans-Karakoram rail link will go through the Gilgit-Baltistan region, which is part of Pakistan-occupied

Kashmir (PoK). The Indian government reacted with concern to the rail-link plan, but also said that it was taking counter measures. "It is definitely a matter of concern. But we are taking our counter measures and we are doing our own preparation," minister of state for defence M M Pallam Raju stated. The rail link will give China access through PoK and comes on the heels of the Tibet rail link, which comes close to the Indian border.

Noting the many areas where China and Pakistan are collaborating, Mr Raju said that both China and Pakistan had made it "very apparent" that they were "working closely together and cooperating closely" on defence and strategic issues.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/Chinese-rail-plan-in-PoK-worries-India/articleshow/6140960.cms>

Ahmar Mustikhan, 'Ethnic Gilgit Baltistan people hail World Bank for defeating dam idea', July 7, 2010

WASHINGTON DC: Members and supporters of one of the most oppressed occupied territories of Pakistan -- Gilgit and Baltistan -- met in Baltimore on July 4 to celebrate the World Bank's recent decision of refusing funds to Islamabad for building the Diamer Dam. The dam was slated to be constructed in the Diamer district of Gilgit-Baltistan, which is a region of Jammu & Kashmir now under Pakistan's illegal occupation, according to a Press release of the Gilgit Baltistan National Council.

Imitaz hussain, president of the G.B.N.C., in a Press statement appreciated the World Bank's timely decision and said, "International donor agencies and foreign countries, including China, are requested to refuse any support to Pakistan which may result in construction of mega projects and military infrastructure," he said. "These projects provide no benefits to the natives of Gilgit-Baltistan. However, the environmental

consequences attached to these projects are critical, which will hurt the future generations."

http://mustikhan.newsvine.com/_news/2010/07/07/4634683-ethnic-gilgit-baltistan-people-hail-world-bank-for-defeating-dam-idea

'UJC Flays AJK PM for Kashmir Remarks'

SRINAGAR: The United Jihad Council (UJC) has severely flayed the Pakistan controlled Azad Kashmir primer minister, Raja Farooq Hyder, for asking Islamabad to de-link Kashmir from its dialogue with New Delhi, to keep the issue in suspended animation while sorting out other matters and to give India a transit route granting it the most favoured nation status.

"The statement reflects Raja Farooq's short-sightedness, incompetence and mental depravity, and is a U-turn on the government's stated 63-year-old policy on an issue which has 8 lakh Indian troops showering bullets on unarmed Kashmiris," the UJC spokesman, Syed Sadaqat Hussain, said.

http://kashmirobsrver.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4931:ujc-flays-ajk-pm-for-kashmir-remarks&catid=3:regional-news&Itemid=4

'Wrong signals', Dawn, July 6, 2010

Reports that the water and power ministry has blocked an \$800m hydropower project are baffling. The 500MW project, proposed for Mahl in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has been shelved supposedly on procedural and technical grounds. According to reports in this paper, attempts to arrange a meeting between Prime Minister Gilani and the AJK premier in order to sort out the issue have also been thwarted by the ministry. Left in the lurch is a Korean consortium which was supposed to finance the project. According to a senior official in the ministry, the go-ahead for the project was "premature" due to poor geology and boundary problems between AJK and Punjab. At the root of this confusion seems to be the fact that elements

within the bureaucracy were delaying the project for their own benefit. However, though doing so may actually benefit a few, it appears to be detrimental to the nation's interests.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/wrong-signals-670>

Shabir Choudhry, 'Exploitation of Kashmiri resources must stop; Pak wrong policies forcing people to be pro India, said Kashmiri leaders in a seminar held in Luton', July 5, 2010

The seminar titled Neelam Jhelum Hydroelectric Project was organised by Kashmir National Party in Luton on 4 July, in which Kashmiris and Pakistanis representing different view points took part. All the speakers expressed their serious concerns about the exploitation of natural resources of Jammu and Kashmir, and demanded that this process must stop.

The Kashmiri leaders said India and Pakistan while using our resources must keep in mind that these resources belong to people of Jammu and Kashmir. If people of Jammu and Kashmir do not benefit from the development projects then that would be considered as plundering and looting of our natural resources.

<http://drshabirchoudhry.blogspot.com/2010/07/exploitation-of-kashmiri-resources-must.html>

'Marvi urges PM not to impose cut on AJK budget', The Nation, July 6, 2010

ISLAMABAD: PML-Q legislator Marvi Memon in a letter to the Prime Minister has urged the latter not to cut from the budget allocated for Azad Jammu and Kashmir as it will affect the national security and reconstruction process of the earthquake-hit areas. She has also demanded of the PM to present the performance report of ERRA as well as details of its accounts in the National Assembly. "Cut in AJK budget will delay humanitarian, national security and reconstruction works. So it must be avoided and budget allocations to AJK should be restored," Marvi writes in her letter to Prime

Minister after her two-day visit to AJK.

[http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Islamabad/06-Jul-2010/Marvi-urges-PM-not-to-impose-cut-on-AJKbudget?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-englishonline%2Fislamabad+\(The+Nation+%3A+Islamabad+News\)](http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Islamabad/06-Jul-2010/Marvi-urges-PM-not-to-impose-cut-on-AJKbudget?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-englishonline%2Fislamabad+(The+Nation+%3A+Islamabad+News))

Syed Abbas Gardezi, 'Marvi pledges to fight AJK's case', The News, July 3, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: Member National Assembly Standing Committee on AJK & GB Affairs Marvi Memon declared to fight AJK's case with federal government acknowledging the strategic importance of the region, facing budget cut in development sector for the fiscal year 2010-11. Marvi Memon, who is on a three-day visit to AJK, was addressing a 'Meet the Press' programme in Central Press Club Muzaffarabad on July 2. "AJK is the jugular vein of Pakistan. Its strategic importance cannot be denied and if the federal government intends to play political tricks as some voices are being heard from some serious quarters, it would put Pakistan's case on Kashmir at stake," she observed.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=248649

'No terror training camps in AJK: FO', Daily Times, July 1, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on June 30 rejected allegations leveled by Indian Army Chief General VK Singh about the existence of terrorist training camps in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Responding to the Indian army chief's statement, Foreign Office Spokesperson Abdul Basit termed the remarks "baseless and self-serving". "Terrorism is a global and regional issue. Pakistan's own concerns vis-a-vis India in this regard have been amply conveyed. Both sides have agreed to discuss the issue of terrorism and to address this matter in a cooperative and pragmatic manner," he said.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C07%5C01%5Cstory_1-7-2010_pg7_34

'AJK government to initiate population control programme soon', Business Recorder, July 1, 2010

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government is inking an integrated plan for the welfare of the women-folk besides starting a drive to discourage the trend of increased population in the State, Naheed Tariq, AJK Minister for Population Welfare and Women Development stated. She further stated since the increase in population across the world had turned into a serious global issue, the AJK government would soon evolve a strategy to overcome the trend in the area.

<http://www.brecorder.com/index.php?id=1075542&currPageNo=1&query=&search=&term=&supDate>

'Malik assures fool proof security in AJK'

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rehman Malik during a meeting with Prime Minister AJK Raja Farooque Haider Khan stated that every possible support would be provided and every measure should be taken to improve the law and order situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. According to details, Interior Minister Rehman Malik held meeting with Prime Minister AJK Raja Farooque Haider Khan discussed law and order situation in the region, affairs related to NADRA and passport offices in the region.

<http://www.thefinancialdaily.com/NewsSearchResult/NewsSearchDetail.aspx?NewsId=128910>

Economic Developments

Shaheen Malik, 'Good week for Poonch-Rawalakote trade'

RAJOURI: While this week's cross-LoC trade through Uri-Muzaffarabad route remained suspended owing to the unrest in the valley, trade on Poonch-Rawalakote route went on smoothly with transactions worth over Rs six crore. According to Custodian Cross-LoC Trade Poonch, Rangeet Singh, 47 vehicles carrying goods worth Rs 4.38 crores were received at Poonch while 43 vehicles carrying goods worth two crores were sent to Rawalakote. Meanwhile, according to sources, some traders from Kashmir had sought permission for conducting trade through Poonch-Rawalakote route. However, they were told to register their firms prior to sending any consignments through this route.

http://www.risingkashmir.com/?option=com_content&task=view&id=25231

'Mega industrial zone on cards', Pakistan Observer

MIRPUR: After the AJK government placed an attractive chunk of funds, in the new fiscal year's (2010-11) budget, for industrialization of the State, the government has chalked out a phased plan to establish a new mega industrial zone over an area of 26,000 kanals of land in the district. The new industrial zone was proposed to be established at Moori, on Mirpur-Jatlan road, for which the required land was being acquired by the government. Sources further stated that the AJK government was giving due attention to promote business and industrial activities in AJK, where a conducive atmosphere was already available. r to sending any consignments through this route.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=40366>

'China's TGC to invest in Pakistan's energy

sector', The News, July 7, 2010

BEIJING: China's Three Gorges Corporation (TGC) has expressed agreement to make 10 billion dollar investment in energy sector in Pakistan. Addressing the media after holding meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari, the chairman TGC Mr. Koing Jang noted that a dam with capacity to generate 7000-megawatt electricity in Bonji place of Gilgit-Baltistan while another dam with capacity to generate 1200-megawatt electricity will be built in Gohala place.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=108073>

'Gilgit-Baltistan decides to recover Rs800m loans', The Tribune

Gilgit-Baltistan's Agriculture Development Bank has decided to recover loans worth Rs800 million given to nearly 19,000 people, stated sources. These loans were given during the tenure of former president Pervez Musharraf. This decision was made because the government has not issued any funds to the bank after it waived these loans eight years ago. These 19,000 defaulters are those who had received loans of a maximum of Rs50,000 and Musharraf during one of his visits to Gilgit had announced that these loans would be written off. No such notification for writing off the loans has been received by the bank so far, therefore it has no option but to launch a recovery drive.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/26375/gilgit-baltistan-decides-to-recover-rs800m-loans/>

Zeeshan Javid, 'World Bank refuses to fund Diamer-Bhasha Dam', Daily Times, July 3, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has refused to fund the Diamer-Bhasha Dam due to, what they claim, is the controversial legal status of Gilgit-

Baltistan territory. The revelation was made by Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) official who was briefing the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Inter-Provisional Coordination on July 2. The committee meeting was chaired by Mir Ahmedan Khan Bugti and discussed existing water sources and proposals for building new dams.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C07%5C03%5Cstory_3-7-2010_pg1_3

A.H. Nizami, 'Businessmen criticize AJKCCI performance', Pakistan Observer

MIRPUR: Local business class has accused the sitting management of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry (AJKCCI) of disbanding affiliation of the Chamber with the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) following, what they called, the poor and inefficient performance of the incumbent office bearers of the chamber. An emergent meeting of the local business community including members of the AJKCCI was held with renowned political

and business personality Khan Tariq Ismail Khan in the Chair wherein speakers demanded a high level probe into the scam which led to damage of the high stature of the apex house of the business community of AJK to a great extent.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=39867>

'AJK Assembly approves 47 blns financial budget 2010-11', June 30, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu & Kashmir Assembly, on June 30, approved more than 47 billion rupee budget for the financial year 2010-11 with majority, incorporating the proposal put forward by treasury benches of the house along with several amendments proposed by the opposition members of the assembly. The approval was given in the budget session of the house for fiscal year 2010-11 chaired by the speaker assembly Shah Ghulam Qadir.

<http://www.sananews.net/english/2010/06/30/ajk-assembly-approves-47-blns-financial-budget-2010-11/>

International Developments

'The United States Announces the Signature Water Program for Pakistan', Office of the Spokesman, Washington DC, July 19, 2010

Satpara Dam Irrigation Project: This project, located in Skardu, Gilgit-Baltistan, connected to the new energy-producing dam will help improve irrigation for 15,500 acres of land and provide 3.1 million gallons of clean drinking water daily for Skardu's 280,000 local residents.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/07/144815.htm>

'Kashmir Centre Brussels hosts seminar series', Kashmir Media Service, July 9, 2010

BRUSSELS: Kashmir Centre Brussels hosted a seminar series 'Rediscovering Dialogue' at its office

to discuss India-Pakistan peace initiatives. Speakers of the seminar series included the Chairman of Kashmir Centre, Barrister Abdul Majeed Tramboo, Professor Marco Lombardi, Associate Professor at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, Ms Victoria Schofield, a renowned writer and expert on Kashmir affairs.

<http://www.kmsnews.org/news/kashmir-centre-brussels-hosts-seminar-series>

Other Developments

'Gilgit Baltistan: Attabad Artificial Lake is a Ticking 'Water' Bomb', UNPO

The Entire Population of Gilgit-Baltistan must unite to Change Pakistan's Apathetic Attitude Towards the Affected People of Hunza and Gojal, the Gilgit Baltistan National Congress (GBNC) stated. The members and supporters of Gilgit Baltistan National Congress gathered at Ellicott City, Maryland on July 18, 2010 to discuss the deteriorating conditions in Hunza; a valley of the Princely State of Jammu & Kashmir currently occupied by Pakistan. On the occasion, President of GBNC, Imtiaz Hussain condemned the authorities for calling the affected protestors as troublemakers.

<http://www.unpo.org/article/11353>

Aziz Ali Dad, 'Recreation of risks in Gilgit-Baltistan, Dawn, July 18, 2010

Attabad disaster of last January was the tip of the iceberg. There are numerous locations in Gilgit-Baltistan which for ages have remained exposed to natural disasters. The foremost question that arises is: why local communities recreate risks? To understand this phenomenon, it is important to understand the interface among the social factors that contributes to the creation and recreation of risks in the particular geographical setting of Gilgit-Baltistan.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/local/islamabad/recreation-of-risks-in-gilgitbaltistan-870>

'Frustrated IDPs protest continues' The Tribune

GILGIT: People affected by the Attabad lake staged a sit-in in a bid to persuade the authorities to listen to their demands. Villagers displaced by the landslide-spurred lake are demanding that the compensation

amount offered to them be increased. They claim the compensation that they have been offered is not enough to build a house. Protesting villagers camped out on the Attabad lake spillway for hours, endangering their lives. At least 200 villagers sat in tents and vowed to return to their destroyed homes instead of accepting the government's compensation.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/26683/frustrated-idps-protest-continues/>

'Museum for rock art', Dawn, July 5, 2010

If we want to save an important aspect of our cultural heritage, we should heed the advice of Prof Harald Hauptman, an expert from Heidelberg University on petroglyphs or rock art. He has called for the establishment of a museum devoted to the preservation of the tens of thousands of rock carvings and inscriptions in Gilgit-Baltistan. According to him, more than half these carvings will be submerged by the construction of the Diamer-Bhasha hydropower dam on the upper Indus River valley.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/museum-for-rock-art-570>

'EU's delegation visits school', Associated Press of Pakistan, Associated Press of Pakistan, July 2, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: A delegation of European Union (EU) headed by its Ambassador Mr. Jan De Kok visited a newly reconstructed school here on July 2. The other members of the delegation including Danish Ambassador, Mr. Anders Christian Hougaard, French Ambassador Mr. Daniel Jouanneau, First Secretary of Belgian Embassy Islamabad Mr. Stephane Mund, First Secretary of the Embassy of Netherlands Mr. Fritz.

Meijndert, and Political Secretary of British High Commission Ms. Sharon McDonald.

http://www.app.com.pk/en/_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=108047&Itemid=2

Shabbir Mir, 'Affectees developing psychological problems', The Tribune

GILGIT: Thousands of people displaced by the Attabad 'landslide' lake in Hunza, especially women, are developing psychological problems due to the unending crisis, stated Wazir Baig, Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly. The lake was formed in January when a massive landslide blocked the flow of the Hunza river, damaging the strategic Karakorum Highway, submerging four villages upstream and killing at least 20 people. According to an official tally, 25,000 people have been displaced by the ever-swelling lake. It's not over yet as official efforts to drain out the lake have not succeeded and many more villages downstream are at risk, if the lake bursts its banks.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/25557/affectees-developing-psychological-problems/>

Farooq Ahmed and Tariq Naqash, 'Extensive damage by flood in AJK, GB', Dawn, July 30, 2010

GILGIT / MUZAFFARABAD: At least 15 people lost their lives when flash floods triggered by heavy rain battered Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir on July 29. Houses and bridges were damaged, farmland inundated, landslides blocked several roads and rivers continued to swell to alarming proportions. According to official sources, five girls were among eight people killed on July 28 night in Gilgit-Baltistan. The administration declared an emergency in Gilgit and called in troops for rescue and relief work.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/extensive-damage-by-flood-in-ajk,-gb-070>

Roshan Mughal, '33 killed in AJK floods' Greater Kashmir, July 31, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: At least 33 persons were killed and 55 wounded while nine were missing in floods that hit capital city of AJK and other areas after incessant rains lashed other Kashmir for three days. Officials noted most of those who died in floods were from Muzaffarabad as 12 persons perished in the waters while 18 were wounded and several were missing. The rivers Neelum, Jhelum and Kunhar with streams and nullahs were inundated and so were the areas on the banks. Two people were killed in district Hattian Bala, three in Mirpur, four in Kotli, two each in district Bagh, Rawalakot and Sudhnuti as houses caved in and in other rain related incidents, officials of Disaster Control Room said.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/Jul/31/33-killed-in-ajk-floods-24.asp>

'More NADRA offices to set up in AJK: Malik', July 3, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: Federal Interior Minister Rehman Malik stated on July 3 that more National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and passport offices will be set up in Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK). During a meeting with Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Raja Farooq Hyder, Rehman Malik said that federal government was not only focusing on the improvement of law and order situation in Azad Kashmir but the problems of Identity cards and passports issuance will also be resolved there.

http://www.samaa.tv/News22154-More_NADRA_offices_to_set_up_in_AJK_Malik.aspx

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir-An Overview

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK): An Overview

Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) is constitutionally an integral part of the Indian Union and remains under Pakistani occupation since 1947¹, when Pakistan's Army engineered a tribal invasion and took control of more than 114,500 square kilometers of J&K. Pakistan declared its occupied part as 'Azad' or free and conferred to J&K Muslim Conference, a pro-Pakistani local political party, to constitute its first titular government.

Subsequent to occupation, Pakistan embarked on the agenda of usurping J&K. First to be annexed was Gilgit-Baltistan, which went under the direct control of Pakistan in 1949, as the leaders of AJK Muslim Conference were forced to hand over these regions of J&K through the 'Karachi Agreement'. Likewise, Shinaki Kohistan and Chitral, which constituted parts of Jammu & Kashmir before its partition in 1947, were also annexed and merged into the NWFP of Pakistan in 1955 and 1970 respectively. Later, when Pakistan and China agreed to demarcate 'international border' in 1963, Pakistan provisionally ceded 19,313 sq. kilometers of trans-Karakoram track of J&K including the segment of Baltistan known as 'Shaksgam' and part of Gilgit called 'Raskam' to China.²

Salient features of PoK are as under:

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

Administrative Divisions: Two, namely Mirpur-Muzaffarabad (referred to as Azad Jammu & Kashmir or AJK by Pakistan) and Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan (FAGB).

Area ceded to China by Pakistan: 19,313 sq. kilometer

Area of Chitral: 14,850 sq. kilometer

Area of Shinaki-Kohistan: 5,398 sq. kilometer

AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR (AJK)

The Muzaffarabad district of Kashmir province, Mirpur and parts of Poonch districts of Jammu province have been under Pakistan's control since the tribal invasion of 1947. Pakistan amalgamated these districts together and created the so-called AJK. AJK is the south-western political entity of the former princely state of Jammu & Kashmir. It borders the present-day Kashmir province to the east, Jammu province to south-east (both separated from it by the Line of Control), the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan (NWFP) to the west, the Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan Region (FAGB) of J&K to the north, and the Punjab Province of Pakistan to the south. 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, Prime Minister, High and Supreme Courts, Penal Code, 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, tax revenues, supposed 'foreign policy', rehabilitation of refugees and the financial control have been carefully placed under the discretion of the political establishment of Pakistan.

Currently, 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 of AJK: 13,297 square km

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

Capital: Muzaffarabad

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

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

President: Raja Zulqarnain Khan

Prime Minister: Raja Farooq Haider Khan

Political Structure

AJK Council: Total 12 members, selected by Prime Minister of Pakistan, six each representing governments of AJK and Pakistan. The AJK Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

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

Judicial System: AJK has its own High and Supreme Courts, which are assisted by district session and magistrate courts. Further, AJK has its own Bar Council and Penal Code. However, approval of chief justices for High and Supreme Courts comes from Pakistani-dominated AJK Council. In addition, Pakistan’s military tribunals also function in AJK. The Chief Secretary, regional commissioners, and Inspector General of Police are also appointed by Pakistani minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan (KAGB), previously known as Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (KANA).

Ethnic Groups: Gujjars, Jats, Mughal, Rajputs, Sudhan, Awan, Qureshi, Pashtuns, Shins, Ladakhi, 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)

Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan (FAGB)

Gilgit-Baltistan was previously referred to by 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 than AJK. It borders Ladakh and Tibet to its east; East-Turkestan to its north; Afghanistan and Tajikistan to its north-west; Chitral to its west; Dir, Swat, Kohistan and Kaghan districts of NWFP to its south while AJK and the Kashmir Valley lie to its south-east. Before 1947, Baltistan was part of Ladakh region and ruled through the Jammu provincial government, while Gilgit was ruled under the authority of Kashmir province. When Pakistan occupied these regions, they were amalgamated under the garb of so-called ‘Northern Areas’ and thereby received the status of federally controlled region in 1974. However, the status of Gilgit-Baltistan is left undefined 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 constitutional and judicial rights. For instance, they lack representation in the Pakistani Parliament, Council of Common Interests (CCI), Hydro-electric Board and National Finance Commission (NFC). Further, they cannot access the provincial high courts and 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 KAGB.

After occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan in 1949, Pakistan administered the region under the draconian and inhumane Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) for around 20 years.³ PM Z.A. Bhutto of Pakistan abolished FCR in 1974 and introduced an ad-hoc presidential ordinance to govern the region. Since then, Gilgit-Baltistan has

been ruled by presidential ordinances, which have come under repeated amendments. In 1994, PM Benazir Bhutto promulgated Northern Areas Governance Order which was later renamed as Legal Framework Order (LFO) by President Musharraf in 2007.⁴ In essence, they all remained as ad-hoc ordinances without any constitutional cover.⁵ As pressure from both local and international political and human rights organizations increased with demands of genuine political and judicial rights for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan announced the so-called 'Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order' on October 26, 2009.⁶ Unfortunately, this order is yet another presidential ordinance with no parliamentary backing, and replaces the current LFO with some amendments.⁷ The term 'self governance' is coined as a strategic move to defuse pressure of the international organizations, which promises to introduce administrative, political, economic and judicial reforms in Gilgit-Baltistan. Although the ordinance is claimed as a replica of the AJK political and judicial system; it refuses the post of president, prime minister to the locals and establishment of penal code, and High and Supreme Courts.

According to the order, Northern Areas will be called Gilgit-Baltistan and the current Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA) will be replaced by Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA), which will have the right to legislate and choose a chief minister. Further, Pakistan will replace the existing Chairman of NALA with a governor to ensure federal government's control over the region. Gilgit-Baltistan would also have its own public service commission, a chief election commissioner, an auditor general, and a boundary commission to settle boundary dispute between Pakistan and J&K. The legislative assembly of Gilgit-Baltistan would have a total of 33 members, including six reserved seats for women and three for technocrats. Further, similar to AJK Council, Gilgit-Baltistan Council will be constituted to ensure representation of federal government in the region. The council will enjoy legislative powers over 60 odd subjects. It will have 15 members

which shall be presided over by the prime minister of Pakistan. While the Assembly is given the powers to propose the budget, approving authority will be ministry of KAGB in Islamabad. Compared to the provinces of Pakistan, where the chief minister is the supreme authority, the newly proclaimed order rests all administrative, political and judicial authority with the Pakistani governor which will eventually make the assembly a toothless tiger. Governor will be the executive authority and custodian of tax and revenues. He will administer Gilgit-Baltistan council on behalf of the prime minister of Pakistan, and oversee public service commission, election commission, boundary commission, judiciary, and auditor general's office. He will be the authority to appoint heads of public service commission, election commission, boundary commission, commissioner of excise and taxation, chief judge of appellate court, auditor general, regional cabinet members and advisors. He will have the right to approve the budget, and dissolve the assembly and impose emergency under prescribed conditions. Further, the Inspector General of Police, Chief Secretary and all departmental secretaries, directors of departments, and commissioner and deputy commissioners of districts will be appointed by the governor. Likewise, it will not be the Assembly but the Council under the governor, which will legislate on natural resources of Gilgit-Baltistan, including minerals, forests, electricity and water storage, industries, school curricula, tourism, cinematography etc.

Salient Features of FAGB are as under:

Area of FAGB: 72,496 sq. kilometer

Population: 870,347 (1998 population census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: seven

Baltistan Region (part of Ladakh) is divided into Ganche and Skardu districts

Gilgit Region is divided into Astore, Diamer, Ghizer, Hunza-Nagar and Gilgit districts

Ethnic Groups: Shin, Balti, Puriki, Ladakhi,

Wakhi, Yashkun, Tibetan, Mongol, Tatar, Mon, Pashtun, Khowar, Dom, Gujjar, Rajput and Kashmiri

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

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

Political Structure: In July 2009, NALA was dissolved before it could complete its 5-years term, and along with that, advisors to the Chairman including the Chief Executive were also sacked. Subsequently, election for GBLA was held on November 12, 2009 under the newly proclaimed self-governance and empowerment order. Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the ruling party of Pakistan, won two-third majority in GBLA and formed government.

Gilgit-Baltistan Council: Total 15 members, selected by Prime Minister of Pakistan; 7 representing government of Gilgit-Baltistan and 8 representing government of Pakistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Further, Chief Minister, Governor, Minister for KAGB and Prime Minister of Pakistan are voting members of GBC.

Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Council: GBLA has 24 directly elected members while 6 female and 3 technocrats come through selection.

Governor of G-B: Dr Shama Khalid

Chief Minister G-B: Syed Mehdi Shah of Skardu district.

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)

Judicial Structure: Instead of High and Supreme Courts, Gilgit-Baltistan will have an appellate court which will be headed by the chief judge. The chief judge, as well the session and district judges will be appointed by the Pakistani prime minister. In

addition to the appellate court, there will be a chief court in Gilgit. The number of judges has been increased from three to five. In addition, Pakistan's military tribunals will continue to function in Gilgit-Baltistan.

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

Per Capita Income: PCI of Gilgit-Baltistan is around one-fourth of Pakistan's average (US\$264 compared to Pakistan's US\$ 1,071).⁸

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.

Endnotes

1. Baltistan was occupied by Pakistan a year later in 1948
2. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2754976?seq=7>
3. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/world/pakistan/law.htm>
4. <http://ips-pk.org/content/view/234/259/>
5. <http://www.kashmirnewz.com/a0012.html>
6. <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/thenewspaper/national/gilgitbaltistanpackage-termed-an-eyewash-089>
7. <http://www.kashmirnewz.com/a0012.html>
8. AKRSP Socio-economic Survey of Northern Areas and Chitral (SESNA C) 2005; http://www.finance.gov.pk/finance_blog/?p=238; <http://finance.kalpoint.com/pdf/highlights/todays-pick/per-capita-income-falls-to-1071.pdf>

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 'Gilgit Baltistan' 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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