

POK

News Digest

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A MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST ON PAKISTAN OCCUPIED KASHMIR

Compiled & Edited by Dr Priyanka Singh

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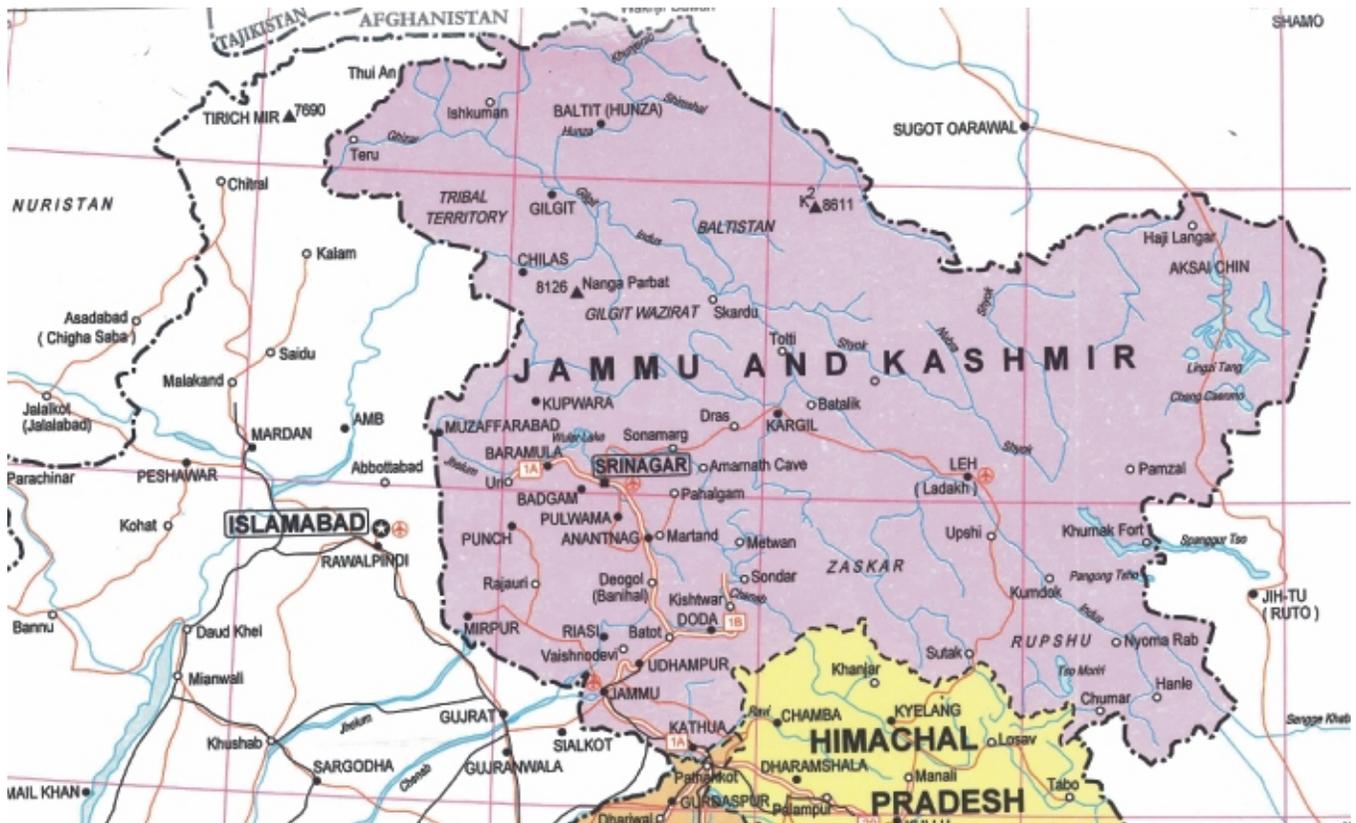
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Jammu & Kashmir

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

In this Edition

Amidst the continuing debate on the constitutional and political status of Gilgit Baltistan, the European Parliament recently criticized the resolution adopted by the Gilgit Baltistan Assembly on the issue of according the region a provincial status. The members of the Friends of Gilgit Baltistan group in the European Parliament alleged that the resolution was adopted under the influence of the ruling Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP). The statement noted that any attempt by Pakistan to dilute the regions' link to Kashmir was a violation of democratic and diplomatic principles and would act contrary to the larger Kashmir cause.

The current issue includes a number of reports on the controversial Diamer Bhasha dam project. Due to an inordinate delay in the project, the total cost of the dam is noted to have escalated. The financial crunch resulting from the perceived unwillingness/lack of interest of the multilateral agencies in providing funds has compelled the President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zadari to intervene and urge Asian Development Bank (ADB) to agree and lead the consortium.

An interesting report brings to notice the illegal transfer of turtles to China from across Gilgit Baltistan. A Chinese national was caught carrying turtles in cardboard boxes from Gilgit Baltistan to China at the Sost check post. These endangered species are smuggled allegedly for consumption in restaurants and for medicinal purposes in China.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

Gilgit-Baltistan resists move to make it Pakistan's fifth state

October 29, 2012

The ethnic, religious and cultural identity of Gilgit-Baltistan is under threat. This is part Pakistani oppression that the region has been facing for the past sixty-four years. Target killings in the region are a routine matter and the law and order situation has deteriorated significantly. The situation has been worsening in the past few years due to increasing sectarian violence. The nationalist leaders of Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir are calling for an end to diktats of Islamabad- imposed through Gilgit-Baltistan Council and Ministry of Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs, to ensure genuine autonomy and self-rule in Gilgit-Baltistan. Pakistan now wants to make Gilgit-Baltistan, a part of the erstwhile Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir, its 5th province.

<http://www.niticentral.com/2012/10/gilgit-baltistan-resists-move-to-make-it-pakistans-fifth-state.html>

GB govt takes notice of delay in promotion of senior officers

Pakistan Today, October 24, 2012

GILGIT: Gilgit-Baltistan government has taken a serious notice of delay in promotion of senior officers and directed secretaries in charge to carry out their assigned role efficiently. In a circular issued on 24 October, 2012, the GB government stated it has been observed that despite repeated instructions during the last two meetings of Secretaries, the processes of timely submission of matured cases before DPC is very slow.

The secretaries in different ministries in GB have been reminded that it is their responsibility to conduct business of the department allocated to them efficiently. Timely promotion of deserving/eligible officers is an integral part of

running the department smoothly. It pointed out that delay in submission of cases results in retirement of eligible officers, lack of incentive and demoralization.

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/10/24/news/national/gb-govt-takes-notice-of-delay-in-promotion-of-senior-officers/>

Appointing judges in GB's apex court

Dawn, October 25, 2012

After the reform package to Gilgit Baltistan was introduced, two posts of judges in the district's chief court were created. However, both the posts in the upper judiciary, i.e. the Supreme Appellate Court, have been lying vacant for a long time. Now the vacancies are allegedly being clinched by people who have vested interest and are trying to bring their near and dear ones to fill them. Thus, merit is being dismissed in the appointment of judges. Besides, the authorities concerned are demanding millions of rupees as bribe for these posts. This is a crime.

A judicial commission exists in our country for the appointment of judges of the apex court. Unfortunately, the commission is not playing any role in the appointment of judges. Judges in the supreme judiciary of Gilgit Baltistan should go through the judicial commission. It is interesting to note that Law Minister Wazir Shakeel has offered himself for one of the posts and it seems obvious that he would be inducted by the government.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/25/appointing-judges-in-gbs-apex-court/>

Parvez Jabr, ERRA completes 8511 projects in earthquake hit areas of AJK, KP

Business Recorder, October 25, 2012

ISLAMABAD: Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) has so far completed 8511 projects in earthquake hit areas of

Azad Kashmir and areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while work is continuing on other 5578 projects, stated an official. Among the projects completed from September 2008 to September 2012 are health, education, clean drinking water, governance, transport, power projects and communication, he stated.

<http://www.brecorder.com/pakistan/general-news/87960-erra-completes-8511-projects-in-earthquake-hit-areas-of-ajk-kp.html>

President asks govt to upgrade Gilgit Airport

Daily Times, October 23, 2012

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Zardari on October 22 asked the government to upgrade Gilgit Airport to improve communication of the area with the rest of the country. President Zardari stated this while talking to the members of Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Council at the Presidency. The members included Professor Ghulam Hussain Saleem, Wazir Ibadat, Muhammad Ibrahim, Amjad Hussain, Saeed Afzal and Attaullah Khan. Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Governor Karam Ali Shah and Chief Minister Mehdi Shah were also present. Developmental projects in Gilgit-Baltistan and overall situation, especially the law and order were discussed during the meeting.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012\10\23\story_23-10-2012_pg7_16

President urges ADB to be lead financier of Diamer-Bhasha Dam project

Associated Press of Pakistan, October 20, 2012

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on October 19 urged the Asian Development Bank to be the lead financier of Diamer-Bhasha Dam Project. The President stated that early completion of this dam was crucial in view of its vitality in diversifying of the energy mix, production of cheap electricity for ensuring smooth running of the economic cycle and to enhancing storage capacity of much-needed water for ensuring continued agricultural productivity. During his meeting with the Board of Directors of Asian Development Bank (ADB), the President stated that energy shortage and water scarcity were among the major issues

faced by the country that hindered smooth economic growth and Government's efforts towards poverty alleviation. The delegation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) consisted of Maurin Sitorus, Ashok Lahiri, Kazuhiko Koguchi, Jerome Destombes, Richard Edwards, Ms. Khin Lwin, Siraj Shamsuddin and Werner E. Liepach.

http://app.com.pk/en/_index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=212315&Itemid=1

Zahid Gishkori, PTI delays G-B, AJK elections till next year

The Express Tribune, October 20, 2012

With serious differences among the party leadership, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has decided to postpone intra-party elections for its Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) chapters till next year. PTI leaders dealing with intra-party elections noted on October 19 that the party will not be able to hold elections for its office-bearers in G-B and AJK till next year since the party's constitution is under scrutiny as there are differences among leaders over the election mechanism. "We have decided to postpone intra-party elections in G-B and AJK for two main reasons- firstly, because of differences among leaders over the exact framework in formulating a party hierarchy and, secondly, due to the ongoing study of PTI's constitution by legal attorneys," a senior official of the party informed. The decision came after PTI's announcement that it will hold intra-party elections on November 2, 2012 in Islamabad.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/454157/pti-delays-g-b-ajk-elections-till-next-year/>

Mushtaq Ghumman, Diamer-Bhasha dam: Pakistan must get NOC from India, insist multilaterals

Business Recorder, October 21, 2012

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani officialdom has failed to grasp the fact that multilaterals such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and World Bank will not support the construction of the 4,500-megawatt Diamer-Bhasha dam in what is considered a disputed territory unless both countries party to the

dispute approved the project, sources noted on October 20. It is for this reason that both multilaterals are insisting that Pakistan gets a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from India before financing of the \$13.5 billion project would be considered.

<http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/1-front-top-news/87092-diamer-bhasha-dam-pakistan-must-get-noc-from-india-insist-multilaterals-.html>

Peace process between India & Pak taken a forward stride: Nayyar Malik

MUZAFFARABAD: The peace process between India and Pakistan has taken a forward stride, as both governments have accorded approval to Azad Jammu & Kashmir Women for Peace Organization (AJKWfPO) in organizing a 3 days Intra-Kashmir, Cross-LoC Women Dialogue at Muzaffarabad in November 2012. The GOP has also, for the first time, allowed cross LOC movements of women delegates from Jammu & Kashmir, which initially was allowed only to the members of separated families. This is another CBM measure extended by GOP.

Two intra-Kashmir Women Conferences were previously held at Srinagar and Gulmarg in 2007 and 2012, 'we were extremely distressed through the narrations of victimized women folk, the atrocities women folk had suffered, during indigenous Kashmiri up-risings. The Kashmiri women have been subjected to gender based violence and suffer deep psycho-social trauma'.

<http://www.sananews.net/english/peace-process-between-india-pak-taken-a-forward-stride-nayyar-malik/>

Parvez Jabri, Education department moving towards progress in GB: Minister

Business Recorder, October 19, 2012

ISLAMABAD: The Education Minister for Gilgit Baltistan, Dr. Ali Madad Sher stated that education department in Gilgit Baltistan is moving towards progress in spite of limited resources. Speaking to a news channel, he stated that 6000 new employment opportunities in education department is placed in the new budget. She stated home schools will be introduced for promoting education among women

of the region. He also stated one thousand new employment opportunities will be advertised at the end of this year.

<http://www.brecorder.com/pakistan/general-news/86883.html>

Diamer-Bhasha Dam project significant for country: PM

Associated Press of Pakistan, October 19, 2012

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf on October 19 stated that the Diamer-Bhasha Dam project was of great importance and there was a national consensus on it. The prime minister expressed these views in a meeting with a six-member delegation comprising Board of Directors of Asian Development Bank (ADB) led by Maurin Sitours at the Prime Minister House in Islamabad.

The prime minister stated that the ADB had been a very reliable partner of Pakistan, which had extended technical and financial assistance to it in many development projects. He stated that Pakistan greatly valued the co-operation extended by the ADB. "It is my earnest desire that we should concentrate on a few strategic projects so that they can be completed in time and yield results," stated the Prime Minister.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/19/diamer-bhasha-dam-project-significant-for-country-pm/>

Govt directs to gear up construction work

Associated Press of Pakistan, October 19, 2012

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu Kashmir Chief Secretary Muhammad Shahzad Arbab while expressing dissatisfaction over the on-going slow-paced development schemes in various parts of the state directed the concerned authorities to gear up the construction work to ensure the timely completion. He issued these directives to departments while chairing the first quarter review meeting of 2012-13 held in Muzaffarabad on October 24. "The second quarter is close to conclusion and during the third quarter heavy rains and land sliding are usually experienced due to which the pace of work is adversely affected so new projects must be launched immediately besides accelerating the

construction work on the already launched projects”, he further stated.

http://app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=212147&Itemid=2

Tourism is the key to progress

Pakistan Today, October 19, 2012

ISLAMABAD: Tourism is one of the best sources of revenue for a country as richly endowed with natural beauty as Pakistan. This can be extremely beneficial in many ways, including financial and social, and this is what we need considering how dimly the world views Pakistan as a centre of terrorism. Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is heaven for the tourists, nature lovers and scientists for their experiments on varied fauna and flora, unique to the area. But for the tourism to be promoted in AJK, the AJK government must be convinced to allow foreigners to visit the areas. The second most important aspect is to improve the infrastructure of telecommunication and roads.

The roads to some of the best places to visit in AJK are not in a good condition, due to rains, floods and negligence of the government. The track that leads to Taobat, an awesome place with river, valley, green trees and streams, is the worst of all. It is not even a proper track, giant boulders are lying on the path and the whole track is dusty. But, despite all this, the tourism department is cooperative and friendly.

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/10/19/news/national/tourism-is-the-key-to-progress/>

Twelve accused of inciting violence released

The Express Tribune, October 19, 2012

GILGIT: Amid cautions of possible terrorist attacks on passenger buses travelling between Gilgit and Rawalpindi, the Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) Police on October 18 released 12 people, including four clerics, who had been detained three months back on charges of inciting violence.

G-B Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police, Ali Sher stated the men were among the 20 people arrested under Section 16 of the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) after over 20 people were

killed in G-B in target killings. He stated the men were detained for three months and were released after they provided written assurances that they will remain peaceful in the future and not incite people towards violence.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/453536/twelve-accused-of-inciting-violence-released/>

Shahbaz Rana, Diامر Bhasha: Only reforms will pave way for dam financing

The Express Tribune, October 19, 2012

ISLAMABAD: Inability to reform the power sector is perhaps the government's biggest failure and seems to be becoming a hurdle in the way of foreign loans, as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has linked funding for Diامر Bhasha Dam with the much-needed reforms. The message was conveyed to Pakistani authorities on October 18 by a visiting delegation of the ADB. The delegation, led by Executive Director Maurin Sitorus comprised members of the board of directors of the Manila-based lending agency. According to the finance ministry, Sitorus stated the energy sector and infrastructure reforms were the focus areas of the ADB.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/453583/diامر-bhasha-only-reforms-will-pave-way-for-dam-financing/>

Gilgit Baltistan: sense of deprivation

Dawn, October 17, 2012

Pakistan is moving towards the next elections and the people of the four provinces will choose their representatives in the provincial and national assemblies for the next five years. However, the people of Gilgit Baltistan will be just spectators rather than active participants of the elections due to the constitutional and administrative status of the area.

Historically, Gilgit Baltistan was liberated from the Dogras by the people of the area who voluntarily affiliated to Pakistan. However, connecting it with the Kashmir dispute, the habitants of the area have been waiting for their constitutional fate for the last six decades. During this long period the people were governed through tailor made ordinances without complete constitutional status. It is

pertinent to note that the people of Indian controlled Kashmir have been participating in their national elections and the people of Azad Kashmir have also been enjoying a better political setup. Nonetheless, the people of Gilgit Baltistan have been sacrificing for a long time and still waiting for their constitutional rights.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/17/gilgit-baltistan-sense-of-deprivation/>

Andrew Buncombe, Birmingham's bus ride to Pakistan

October 17, 2012

A 12-day bus service linking Birmingham with a city in Pakistan has been floated as a means of strengthening ties between the two communities. Promising a "thrilling ride", Tahir Khokher, the Transport Minister with Pakistan's Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Regional Government, has suggested a 6450km link between Mirpur and England could be particularly popular with young people and those with a sense of adventure.

The West Midlands has long-established links with the AJK region - the capital, Mirpur, is sometimes called Little England or Little Brum. Birmingham is reputed to be home to the largest population of Pakistani Kashmiris outside the country, many having left in the 1960s after the construction of a major dam. The route would pass through at least seven countries and cost about \$250, a considerable saving on the \$1170 of an average flight. "It could be popular, especially with the young. It would be an experience, an adventure," stated Hamza Waris, who works in his family-owned travel company, Pak Travels, in Birmingham's Small Heath area. "It would depend on how things were in Pakistan and in the countries on route".

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/travel/news/article.cfm?c_id=7&objectid=10840733

Terrorism threat: Suspects held for tailing passenger bus

The Express Tribune, October 17, 2012

GILGIT: A group of suspected terrorists has been arrested by security forces near Kohistan. A security official noted that the men were arrested after they

were found tailing a passenger bus heading towards Gilgit from Rawalpindi on the Karakoram Highway (KKH). The official stated that the men were travelling in a private car in an area between Kohistan and Mansehra, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P). However, when contacted, the Gilgit-Baltistan Police expressed ignorance over the development. "We are not aware of any such incident," stated G-B Deputy Inspector General of Police Ali Sher.

The G-B Police have ensured sufficient security to all passenger buses passing through their territory, he added. Meanwhile, in a meeting in Chilas on October 16, district officials of Diamer and Kohistan discussed ways to make travelling on the KKH safe for passengers. The officials agreed to set up checkpoints on all unmanned areas besides conducting surveillance of the area between Chilas and Kohistan. They also decided to seek help of a jirga from Kohistan to ensure safe journey for passengers over the KKH.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/452518/terrorism-threat-suspects-held-for-tailing-passenger-bus/>

Mushtaq Ghumman, Diamer-Bhasha dam project: Centre blames ADB for \$2 billion loss

Business Recorder, October 18, 2012

The federal government has accused the Asian Development Bank (ADB) of causing \$2 billion (Rs 190 billion) loss to Pakistan in four years because of its dilly dallying on 4,500-megawatt Diamer-Bhasha dam, sources close to Chairman Wapda noted on October 17. Secretary Cabinet Division, Nargis Sethi, who is holding the additional charge of Secretary Water and Power, will hold a meeting with ADB's Board Group on energy vision, ongoing project and new proposal on October 18. "ADB has a portfolio of \$2 billion for Pakistan's energy sector and we are discussing existing and future projects with the ADB delegation," stated an official. "ADB has reversed its commitment of providing lead financing and support for Diamer-Bhasha dam and the ADB President and new Director General Klaus Gerhaeusser have adopted a hostile approach to this project in line with the thinking of the World Bank," sources added. Sources further stated a senior official of ADB on June 28 this year met the

Minister for Water and Power wherein the key issue discussed was the lead financing role for the project.

<http://www.brecorder.com/top-stories/0/1248733/>

No money for dams

Dawn, October 18, 2012

The financial constraints facing Wapda are likely to hit another hydropower project Gomal Zam dam. The contractor, the Frontier Works Organisation, has put the authority on notice for immediate clearance of its dues of Rs4bn. In case Wapda fails to do so, the work on the dam will be stopped. It means the commissioning of the project, which was scheduled to be completed five years ago, will be further delayed. The nearly completed dam will produce 17.5MW electricity and irrigate 191,000 acres of land in Tank and D.I. Khan. Gomal Zam is not the first hydropower project hit by the paucity of funds. There are many others, like Neelum-Jhelum, while the work on the 4,500MW Diamer-Bhasha dam is yet to start because of unavailability of financing.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/18/no-money-for-dams/>

PML-N: high court judge probe worker's killing

Dawn, October 13, 2012

MUZAFFARABAD: A senior leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), AJK chapter, on demanded of the AJK government to appoint a high court judge as head of the commission to probe the killing of a party worker in police firing. Chaudhry Tariq Farooq, who is also deputy leader of the opposition in legislative assembly, expressed his distrust in the 'commission of inquiry' headed by a district and sessions judge and stated the government should take serious steps to establish rule of law in the region.

“Firstly, being civil servants, members of subordinate judiciary are prone to the influence of the government and secondly the district judge whose appointment has been approved by the prime minister has served as public relations officer to a minister in the previous People's Party government and his spouse is also an office-bearer of the ruling party. He should have himself declined to head the

commission,” stated the PML-N leader at a press conference.

On September 18, hundreds of PML-N workers, led by Mr Farooq, had staged a rally in Bhimber city to protest what they alleged registration of fake cases against their colleagues. As the demonstrators reached at the entrance of the district headquarters complex, the police lobbed teargas shells on them besides resorting to firing, which left one activist dead and two others wounded.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/13/pml-n-high-court-judge-probe-workers-killing/>

AJK, GB elections, bye-polls in provinces proof of PPP popularity: Kaira

Associated Press of Pakistan, October 16, 2012

HYDERABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Qamar Zaman Kaira on October 15 stated that negative propaganda against Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) cannot distance the masses from the party of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. Addressing a large public rally here amid slogans of “Jiay Bhutto and Jiay Benazir Bhutto”, the minister stated that the bye-elections held in all four provinces and general elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir were the proof of the fact that the masses of Pakistan support the policies of the PPP under the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari. He stated that the government was pursuing its reconciliation policy to strengthen the democratic institutions of the country and bringing improvements in common man's life. Lashing out at the opponents of the PPP, the minister stated that their claims that amendments in the Constitution and National Finance Commission Award will not benefit the common man were “ridiculous”.

http://app.com.pk/en/_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=211715&Itemid=1

No Public Service Commission present in AJK to recruit people on merit on Gazetted posts

ISLAMABAD: Despite having Legislative Assembly, Supreme Court, High Court and Election Commission there is no institution present in Azad Jammu and Kashmir which could

give jobs to people on merit. The whole system of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission was suspended when Chairman of the Commission Sardar Latif and six members of the commission had completed their tenure of three years of service on 16th June 2012; meanwhile the government despite of passage of five months has not appointed the chairman and members of the commission.

At present the sitting government is distributing all the Gazetted posts to its workers on ad-hoc basis; meanwhile the Information Minister AJK Bazil Naqvi has claimed to resolve the issue during the next 10 days. He stated that the work is in progress and appointments would be made soon.

<http://www.sananews.net/english/no-public-service-commission-present-in-ajk-to-recruit-people-on-merit-on-gazetted-posts/>

New GB uplift era begins

Pakistan Observer, October 13, 2012

ASTORE: The recent visit of Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf to Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) will usher the region in a new era of development, stated Provincial Vice President PYO Wazir Kamran on October 12. He further stated the announcements made by the government would be implemented in letter and spirit. He stated Diamer-Bhasha Dam project was not only beneficial for the masses of Gilgit-Baltistan but also for the rest of the country. According to Kamran, the government was utilizing all available resources for the betterment of the masses and was striving to improve health facilities.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=177895>

Four AJK officials suspended

Dawn, October 11, 2012

MUZAFFARABAD: The AJK government has placed four officers associated with Jinnah Model Town project of Mirpur Development Authority (MDA) under suspension. According to a notification issued by Services and General Administration Department, Chaudhry Mohammad Ilyas, chief engineer highways

(south)/member technical MDA, Chaudhry Khalid Sultan, director works, MDA, Muzaffar Hussain, deputy director works, MDA and Mohammad Saleem, divisional accountant would face proceedings under Removal from Service (Special Powers) Act, 2001.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/11/four-ajk-officials-suspended/>

Gilgit Skardu Road Project in limbo

Muttahida Quami Movement has announced to raise the issue of cancellation of Gilgit Skardu road project in the national assembly. Talking to media, MQM's deputy parliamentary leader, Haider Abbas Rizvi stated that the Gilgit Skardu road had great importance for the progress of the region therefore his party would not allow any one to make hurdles in the way of this project. He stated that the matter would also be brought in the notice of prime minister.

“Bureaucracy has been using bad tactics to keep the region backward since long but this time MQM, with the help of the people, will fight against any discrimination”. It is worth mentioning here that the federal ministry of communication has removed the Gilgit Skardu road reconstruction project from the annual development plan.

<http://www.dardistantimes.com/gilgit-skardu-road-1289>

Homage paid to people of quake-hit AJK

Business Recorder, October 9, 2012

The 7th anniversary of history's worst earthquake of October 8, 2005 was observed across Azad Jammu Kashmir on October 8. The anniversary was observed as National Disaster Awareness day. Special ceremonies were held to express solidarity with the people of quake-hit AJK zone.

A ceremony in a local hotel was held to mark the day in which rich tribute was paid to the victims of the country's worst natural catastrophe. The day dawned with special prayers in the mosques across AJK for the departed souls of the quake victims. It was a state holiday in AJK.

<http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/1246107/>

Shabbir Mir, Terrorist threat: Gilgit-Baltistan, K-P governments urged to remain vigilant

The Express Tribune, October 10, 2012

GILGIT: The ministry of interior has cautioned of possible terrorist attacks in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. In a letter sent by the ministry's National Crisis Management Cell, the department urged both the governments to be vigilant, citing that terrorists are being trained in Waziristan Agency and may carry out attacks in G-B or K-P anytime.

The department also informed that the terrorists who killed 19 passengers, mostly Shias, at Laluser, Kohistan a couple of months back were also trained in Waziristan, adding that the terrorists were “probably being supported by foreign agencies”. The ministry also stressed the need to nab the gangs involved in target killings in G-B and ensure peace in the region.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/449155/terrorist-threat-gilgit-baltistan-k-p-governments-urged-to-remain-vigilant/>

Parvez Jabr, No shortage of wheat in Gilgit-Baltistan: Ikram

Business Recorder, October 9, 2012

HUNZA: There is no shortage of wheat in any district of Gilgit-Baltistan as ample quantity was being supplied to the upper areas before the start of winter season, stated Director Civil Supply Ikram Ullah on October 9. He stated warehouses had been established at various main points of all the districts and supply of wheat at these warehouses was continued.

<http://www.brecorder.com/pakistan/general-news/84768-no-shortage-of-wheat-in-gilgit-baltistan-ikram.html>

ERRA completes 8979 projects during five years

Associated Press of Pakistan, October 10, 2012

ISLAMABAD: Director General Planning Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Authority Brig(rtd) Pervez Niazi stated that ERRA has completed 8979 projects out of 14528 assigned projects in AJK and KPK's quake-hit areas during five years. He stated his department did not stop

work on any project due to shortage of funds, however work on certain projects has been slowed. He termed ERRA as the country's successful public department, which carried out gigantic task for its countrymen in rebuilding the earthquake affected areas. To a question about the priorities of the department, Pervez Niazi stated ERRA is giving top priority to education sector and 2386 schools, colleges and universities have so far been completed in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while 3365 more educational institutions will have to be completed, for which about Rs. 15 billions are required.

http://app.com.pk/en/_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=210867&Itemid=2

Raja Muzaffar Bhat, Line of Misfortune

October 11, 2012

Separated in 1971, two brothers from Turtuk haven't seen their parents- Mohammad Ali, just 5 when Indian Army captured his village “Thang” located in Nobra valley near Turtuk block of Ladakh during 1971 India-Pakistan war. Till 1971 Thang was part of Gilgit Baltistan province which is located near famous Askardu city in Pakistan.

Recently I was in Ladakh area in connection with some official work and I met Mohammad Ali through one of my friends, Ghulam Hussain, a social activist who also hails from Nubra valley. Mohammad Ali and his brother Ahmad Shah were just 5 and 3 years of age respectively in 1971 when Indian military personnel reached Thang and the village fell into territorial jurisdiction of India after being captured from Pakistan, but the tragedy was that Ali's parents including grandmother had gone to nearby Franu village (which is under control of Pakistan) in connection with some domestic work and the young children were left at home with the grandfather and when they tried to come back a bloody line “LOC” had been drawn till then thus separating little ones from their parents and grandmother. The grandfather tried a lot to ensure his son, daughter-in-law and wife could come back but they couldn't make it. As on date Mohammad Ali who is now 45 and his brother 43 years of age haven't seen their father, mother and other siblings,

who were born after 1971. The grandma also expired without seeing her husband (Ali's grandfather) and vice versa.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Oct/11/line-of-misfortune-66.asp>

Peer Muhammad, Right to amend: Clueless minister heading body on G-B governance ordinance

The Express Tribune, October 8, 2012

ISLAMABAD: Over a year after it was constituted, it seems that the man heading a committee that was supposed to discuss amendments to the Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self Rule Order 2009 is clueless about any progress made. The committee was constituted in August 2011 on the direction of President Asif Ali Zardari in response to a resolution passed by the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly in 2010 seeking amendments to clause 93 of the G-B Empowerment and Self Rule Order.

However, when approached for comment on the progress made by the committee, no one from the Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan (KAGB) Ministry was ready to give their version. Even the public relations officer for the ministry, Saqib Mumtaz, stated he was not authorised to give an official version to the media.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/448432/right-to-amend-clueless-minister-heading-body-on-g-b-governance-ordinance/>

Tariq Naqash, Earthquake 2005: A story of forgotten promises

Dawn, October 8, 2012

MUZAFFARABAD: As the entire nation commemorated the 7th anniversary of the October 2005 earthquake on October 8, most of the survivors were still concerned about the pledged reconstruction work, which is still not completed. Like an annual ritual, government functionaries started bragging about their achievements and future plans regarding the reconstruction program, soon after the onset of October, notwithstanding a widely known bitter reality acute scarcity of cash flow.

According to figures obtained from the State Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation

Agency (Serra), out of 7,984 projects/facilities, 4,693 had so far been completed, while work was “in progress” on another 2,068. Around 1,223 projects were yet to be started. The education sector was still the worst hit, as out of the 2,792 projects, 1,714 were either “in progress” or yet to be started.

According to Sardar Rahim Khan, who was recently posted as Secretary Serra, the reconstruction related bodies Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (Erra) and Serra were unable to complete projects according to their Annual Work Plan (AWP) due to acute financial crisis faced by the country.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/08/earthquake-2005-a-story-of-forgotten-promises-2/>

AH Nizami, Financial crunch delays reconstruction in quake-hit areas

The Express Tribune, October 8, 2012

MIRPUR: Seven years on, the governments of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) have been unable to complete reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in the areas devastated by the 2005 apocalyptic earthquake due to a financial crunch. “Only 60 per cent of reconstruction and rehabilitation work in the quake-hit AJK zone, comprising five districts, has been completed thus far,” revealed a senior official of the AJK State Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (SERA). The devastated AJK districts are Muzaffarabad, Neelam Valley, Bagh, Rawalakot and Sudhanoti.

The revelation negates the tall claims of government officials about rehabilitation efforts. Soon after the deadly tremor, the Pakistan government spelled out a massive reconstruction and rehabilitation plan worth billions of rupees for the affected areas.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/448526/financial-crunch-delays-reconstruction-in-quake-hit-areas/>

ASMA RAZAQ, 2005 earthquake: government failed to acquire land to construct new Balakot City

Business Recorder, October 9, 2012

The government has failed to acquire the land

necessary to construct a new Balakot, a commitment made subsequent to the October 8, 2005 devastating earthquake. The 7.6 magnitude earthquake that struck Pakistan on October 8, 2005 was spread over an area of approximately 30,000 sq. km across Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), and covered five districts of NWFP and four districts of AJK.

<http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/1246160/>

Much awaited amendments to be introduced to AJK's constitution

The Express Tribune, October 7, 2012

MIRPUR: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Chaudhary Abdul Majeed disclosed late on October 6 that much awaited amendments would soon be introduced in the interim constitution of AJK in consultation with all political forces, retired judges, lawyers and other stakeholders. Addressing the annual session of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Supreme Court Bar Association in Muzaffarabad, the prime minister asserted that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government in AJK respected the independence of judiciary when it faced troubles with the restoration of the judiciary and reinstatement of deposed judges.

The premier assured the audience that his government believed in strengthening institutions including the legal fraternity. “The supremacy of merit and provision of justice across the board is my agenda... I assure you all that I will leave no stone unturned to implement my policy”, he maintained.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/448123/much-awaited-amendments-to-be-introduced-to-ajks-constitution/>

Syed Abbas Gardezi, AJK govt believes in supremacy of judiciary: Majeed

The Express Tribune, October 7, 2012

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister, Chaudhry Abdul Majeed has stated that the PPP government in AJK believed in supremacy of judiciary. He stated this while addressing the annual session of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Supreme Court Bar Association on October 6.

The PM stated that AJK government believed in strengthening of the institutions. He reaffirmed that neither he would allow anyone to take bribe nor he himself would ever be found involved in such acts. The AJK premier stated that his government's one year's performance compared with all previous governments and people would be of immense difference.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-7-136184-AJK-govt-believes-in-supremacy-of-judiciary-Majeed>

Increase in hospital fees termed unwarranted

The Express Tribune, October 4, 2012

MIRPUR: Rights activists and social workers in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) have expressed concern over the 'staggering' increase in the cost of health care in state-run hospitals and medical units. They have termed the decision unwarranted. The government recently directed the AJK Health Services Department to increase various medical charges in state-run hospitals, basic health units and rural health centres some by as much as 425 per cent. Examination fee for outpatients has been increased from Rs5 to Rs30, while admission fee has been increased from Rs120 to Rs510, to mention a few.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/446622/increase-in-hospital-fees-termed-unwarranted/>

AJK cabinet meeting: Development schemes worth Rs3.4b approved

The Express Tribune, October 4, 2012

MIRPUR: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet Development Committee (CDC) approved development schemes worth Rs3.4 billion on October 3 during a meeting with AJK Prime Minister Chaudhry Abdul Majeed. PM Majeed stated the government believes in indiscriminate development across the state and aims to eliminate the sense of deprivation among people living in remote areas.

For the transport and communication sector, the committee approved Rs123.302 million for improvement and widening of the 10km patch of Batlian Phagwan Road, Rs140.257 million for the 10km Lamnian Reshian Road, Rs366.748 million

for different link roads in Muzaffarabad Division, Rs128.806 million for Beli Bridge on Jehlum River near Ambore, Rs307.323 million for a 4.5km patch of Khaliqabad Road in Mirpur and Rs146.486 million for a bridge on Jatli Ali Baig Road.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/446617/ajk-cabinet-meeting-development-schemes-worth-rs3-4b-approved/>

Attack on press club: Seven PML-N workers turn themselves in

The Express Tribune, October 5, 2012

MIRPUR: Seven workers of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Azad Kashmir chapter voluntarily handed themselves over to the police on October 4, three days after a case was registered against them. The workers had been booked for thrashing journalists and ransacking the Central Press Club in Muzaffarabad after three Urdu dailies published reports defaming a senior member of the party. They also burnt copies of the Urdu dailies, one Rawalpindi-based and two local, in which the reports were published.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/447174/attack-on-press-club-seven-pml-n-workers-turn-themselves-in/>

PM's GB visit to bring peace, help generate economic activity

Associated Press of Pakistan, October 30, 2012

GILGIT: A high level meeting to review the law and order situation in Gilgit-Baltistan will be held in Islamabad soon, which will take important decisions for bringing peace and tranquillity in the region. It will focus on further improving the law enforcement to enable the local people fully exploit the rich tourist potential of the area. The meeting, to be chaired by Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf, has been convened as a follow-up of important decisions taken during his recent two-day visit to the scenic region, whose natural beauty had been marred by a few incidents of sectarian violence. The meeting, which is likely to be held in October 2012, will review the implementation of decisions already taken and also discuss other outstanding issues, including financial matters.

http://app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=210083&Itemid=1

Groundbreaking: AJK PM initiates three mega projects

The Express Tribune, October 1, 2012

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Prime Minister Chaudhry Abdul Majeed performed the groundbreaking of three development projects in Muzaffarabad on September 30. The projects include a water supply scheme costing Rs1.35 billion, a sewerage system costing Rs2.45 billion and a bridge adjacent to AJK Central Press Club at a cost of Rs356 million.

The prime minister stated the government aims to make Muzaffarabad a model city and will also initiate a number of welfare projects across AJK. "The people of AJK state gave us mandate and we are answerable to them," he added. Majeed stated that 40 projects under the Muzaffarabad City Development Programme (MCDP) have been initiated and hoped that all 104 projects planned under MCDP will be completed within the shortest possible time.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/444989/groundbreaking-ajk-pm-initiates-three-mega-projects/>

At UN India insists Kashmir is its 'integral part'

Associated Press of Pakistan, October 2, 2012

UNITED NATIONS: Indian External Affairs Minister told the U.N. General Assembly on October 2 that Kashmir is India's "integral part" on the ground that the people of the disputed state have chosen their destiny through his country's democratic process. "An unwarranted reference has been made to Jammu and Kashmir from this podium," he stated, obviously referring to President Asif Ali Zardari's speech last week in which he reaffirmed Pakistan's principled stand on the decades-old dispute that it should be resolved through negotiations on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions. "Our principled position on the (Kashmir) issue has been consistent and is well known, he stated.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir have chosen and reaffirmed their destiny repeatedly through India's well established democratic processes. "We

wish to make it abundantly clear that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India,” Krishna added.

http://app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=210261&Itemid=2

Mushtaq Ghuman, Hydropower projects in AJ&K: government likely to extend GoP guarantee

Business Recorder, October 2, 2012

Federal Government is likely to extend GoP guarantee for hydropower projects being established in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, top of which is 174 MW Patrind hydropower project, official sources noted. Giving the background, the sources stated, Economic Co-ordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet in 2007 had decided to provide indemnity to the foreign lenders

through Direct Agreements - Implementation Agreement (IA) & Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with the laws of England as the governing laws, to the effect that if the IA, PPA or the GoP Guarantee becomes illegal, invalid, or unenforceable due to change in law, the GoP shall indemnify the project company or the lenders for any cost, loss or liability resulting from such illegality, invalidity or unenforceability, which amount would equal what would have been received under the IA, PPA or the GoP Guarantee, had the IA, PPA or the GoP Guarantee not become illegal, invalid or unenforceable. The IA, PPA and the GoP Guarantee shall continue to be governed by the laws of Pakistan.

<http://www.brecorder.com/fuel-a-energy/193/1243790/>

Economic Developments

Rs13.7bn allocated for Diamer-Basha Dam project: Wapda chief

Business Recorder, October 23, 2012

LAHORE: Federal government has allocated about Rs 13.78 billion for 4500 MW-Diamer-Basha Dam Project during the fiscal year 2012-13. The project is being implemented on priority basis.

These views were expressed by Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) Chairman Raghieb Shah while talking to Gilgit Baltistan Works Minister Bashir Ahmed, Health Minister Haji Gulber Khan and Taxation and Minerals Minister Muhammad Naseer Khan, who called on him on October 22.

<http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/108-pakistan-top-news/87413-rs137bn-allocated-for-diamer-basha-dam-project-wapda-chief-.html>

Diamer-Bhasha Dam project: ADB urged to act as lead financier

Business Recorder, October 19, 2012

Pakistan has requested the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to act as lead financier for \$4.792 billion loan for the construction of Diamer-Bhasha Dam project designed to generate 4500 MW electricity and with a water storage capacity of 6.4 million acre feet (MAF).

Sources noted that the ADB was requested to act as lead financier of Diamer-Bhasha Dam project on October 18 by the economic team led by Finance Minister Dr Abdul Hafeez Sheikh and later during talks on energy sector by the Minister for Water and Power, Ahmed Mukhtar, and other senior officials of Ministry of Finance Water and Power and WAPDA.

<http://www.brecorder.com/money-a-banking/198/1249087/>

World Bank's no to Diamer dam is a conspiracy: RCCI

Dawn, October 5, 2012

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) on October 4 expressed concern over World Bank's refusal to provide funds for Diamer-Bhasha Dam, terming it an international conspiracy. According to a press release, RCCI President Manzar Khurshid Sheikh stated the government should utilise its own resources to complete mega projects. He demanded of the government to create consensus on Kalabagh Dam, which according to experts was the most viable solution to the prevailing energy crunch.

The RCCI chief was talking to a delegation of traders and industrialists on October 4. Senior Vice-President Pervaiz Warriach, Vice-President Nadeem Rauf, group leader Najamul Haq Malik, Sheikh Siddique, Iqbal Ahmed and other members of the chamber were also present.

<http://dawn.com/2012/10/05/world-banks-no-to-diamer-dam-is-a-conspiracy-rcci/>

Khalid Mustafa, 'WB has termed Diamer-Bhasha Dam risk for financiers'

The News, October 4, 2012

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Affairs Division (EAD) on October 3 informed a standing committee of the Senate that the World Bank (WB) had refused to extend a loan for the Diamer-Bhasha Dam project, terming it as risk financing. The EAD officials informed the Senate body about the situation, accepting their failure in arranging finance for the \$12 billion Diamer-Bhasha Dam project.

However, there are some commitments for the project, the latest coming from the US of about

\$220 million. As far as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) was concerned, the EAD officials stated it had never committed any loan for the project before. However, there were some estimates that the ADB would extend a loan of \$3-4 billion if there were visible funding for the project, they added.

The ADB is of the view, according to the EAD Additional Secretary Iftikhar Rauf, that in case the government manages funding from other resources in reasonable size, it would not hesitate to fund the project. “No international financial institution and donor bank is ready for risk financing,” Rauf stated.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-17903-WB-has-termed-Diamer-Bhasha-Dam-risk-for-financiers>

Arrangement of funds a serious problem

The Nation, October 4, 2012

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs was informed on October 3 that the government was facing

serious problems in arranging financial resources for Diamer Bhasha Dam, as the World Bank has refused to provide financing for the dam. The Senate Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs met under the chair of its chairperson Senator Nasreen Jalil. The officials of Economic Affairs Division briefed the committee about the construction of Diamer Bhasha Dam. The Committee was informed that total cost of Diamer Bhasha dam is around \$12 billion. The committee was informed that World Bank has refused to provide financing for the Diamer Bhasha Dam, as the Bank believed that investment in this dam is not viable option. The officials of Economic Affairs Division also informed the Senate body that USTATED has announced to provide \$220 million for the Diamer Bhasha Dam, which is not enough against the complete cost of \$12 billion.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/business/04-Oct-2012/arrangement-of-funds-a-serious-problem>

International Developments

European Parliamentarians condemn Pak Govt move

October 4, 2012

BRUSSELS: Members of the Friends of Gilgit Baltistan in the European Parliament on October 3 condemned Pakistani Government's decision to make Gilgit Baltistan as its fifth Province. In a statement a spokesman of Members of the Friends of Gilgit Baltistan, stated, "The resolution was adopted by the Gilgit Assembly at the behest of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government in Pakistan. It violates all democratic and diplomatic norms and is also contrary to the spirit of Pakistan's constitution itself, which has since accepted Gilgit Baltistan not as a part of Pakistan but as a part of Jammu and Kashmir". He urged the international community to take note, that the people of Gilgit Baltistan are struggling for their rights and seek international intervention to stop Pakistan from absorbing Gilgit Baltistan and withdrew its forces. He also mentioned that it would have some serious strategic and security implications for the region, as instead of using it for progress and enrichment Pakistan has used the region for the purposes of fashioning an environment of "intolerance and violence" that has hit the lives of people in Gilgit Baltistan.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Oct/4/european-parliamentarian-s-condemn-pak-govt-move--60.asp>

US asks Pakistan to securitise dams' assets for seeking funds

October 28, 2012

ISLAMABAD: The United States has asked Pakistan to securitise assets of different dams including Tarbela and Mangla in order to seek funds

from international donors for the multi-billion-dollar Diamer Bhasha Dam. The suggestion came in a meeting between US embassy officials and Federal Water and Power Minister Ahmed Mukhtar.

The diplomats assured the minister that the US would play its role in generating funds to meet the entire cost of \$13bn for the 4,500-megawatt Diamer Bhasha dam and power project by becoming part of a consortium, led by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Earlier, the ADB had refused to lead the consortium. Pakistani authorities expect to raise \$3bn by securitising assets of Tarbela and Mangla Dam, but the US officials insist that all the cost of Diamer Bhasha project will be covered by implementing the securitisation plan. Securitisation means creation of an investment instrument by combining financial assets and then marketing different tiers of the repackaged instruments to the investors.

A video conference will be held next month in Washington involving a US energy team and officials of the Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) to discuss the implementation of the plan of securitising assets of dams. The government is facing difficulties in generating funds for Diamer Bhasha Dam as the World Bank has sought no-objection certificate (NOC) from India, which says that the planned dam site is situated in a "disputed territory".

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/pakistan-afghanistan/212355-us-asks-pakistan-to-securitise-dams'-assets-for-seeking-funds.html>

Other Developments

Zahid Gishkori, G-B, AJK set to have international airports

The Express Tribune, October 26, 2012

President Asif Ali Zardari has directed the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to carry out a study on constructing two new all-weather international airports in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). "The president has directed CAA to carry out a study for the construction of the Chilas International Airport," confirmed CAA spokesperson Pervez George on October 25. He added that studies for constructing another international airport in Mirpur in AJK are also being conducted. According to CAA officials, the authority has already started paperwork for constructing a new international airport in Chilas in order to facilitate G-B residents and attract tourists to the region. Though Chilas already has a small airport, no passenger airline operates from there currently.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/457056/g-b-ajk-set-to-have-international-airports/>

NUML holds colourful 'Gilgit-Baltistan Cultural Day'

The News, October 19, 2012

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Modern Languages (NUML) held the 'Gilgit-Baltistan Cultural Day' on October 18, says a press release. Male students, wearing white neat clothes with handmade white stuffed traditional caps adorned with colourful plumes, and female students, wearing scarlet red and pink dresses with traditional colourful embroidered caps, rendered soulful cultural and traditional performances to celebrate the Gilgit-Baltistan Cultural Day'.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-6-138271-NUML-holds-colourful-Gilgit-Baltistan-Cultural-Day>

Quake-hit areas in AJ&K, Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa: USTATED to construct 77 schools, health facilities

Business Recorder, October 9, 2012

USTATED Pakistan Earthquake Reconstruction and Recovery Programme (PERRP) would complete construction of 77 big schools and health facilities in AJ&K and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by the end of next year. USTATED's Pakistan Earthquake Reconstruction Programme's Chief of Party, Tarek Selim stated while addressing the earthquake commemoration ceremony at a school built by the United States Agency for International Development (USTATED), in Bagh district of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

<http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/1246161/>

30 freshwater turtles released in River Korung

Daily Times, October 9, 2012

ISLAMABAD: The Gilgit-Baltistan Forest, Wildlife and Parks Department, the Climate Change Ministry and the Worldwide Fund (WWF) on October 8 jointly released 30 freshwater turtles in River Korung. A consignment of 34 turtles has been confiscated from Gilgit-Baltistan's Sust border area by the GB Forest, Wildlife and Parks Department, being illegally captured and transported from Pakistan's freshwaters to China on October 3, 2012. This trade in wildlife especially in freshwater turtles is on its peak during the last eight years, which has resulted in killing of several hundreds and thousands of these species in order to feed Chinese restaurants and help in preparing traditional Chinese medicines.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012\10\09\story_9-10-2012_pg7_18

Waqas Naeem, No bricks in the wall: 64% of schools in AJK are still heaps of rubble

The Express Tribune, October 8, 2012

BAGH: Sixty-four per cent of schools destroyed by

the 2005 tremor in Bagh district of AJK are yet to be reconstructed. In all, 770 state-run schools were damaged or destroyed by the earthquake in Bagh. Of them, only 273 have been reconstructed since, according to Raja Roshan Johar, the district education officer. Interestingly, most of these schools have been reconstructed with funding from foreign and local donors. "Now, there is a feeling of discrimination. While some pupils study in schools reconstructed by NGOs, others are made to sit on the rubble of their schools. This might cause an inferiority complex among them," Johar noted in a ceremony held in connection with the 7th anniversary of the 2005 earthquake at a state-run school reconstructed by USTATED in Dhal Qazian.

Another speaker, Gul Zaman, who led a community-based team to support USTATED's reconstruction of the Dhal Qazian boys' high school, appealed to the AJK government to provide relief to the students and teachers working under difficult conditions at the quake-affected schools.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/448531/no-bricks-in-the-wall-64-of-schools-in-ajk-are-still-heaps-of-rubble/>

G-B electricity woes: Winter is coming, and outages are getting worse

The Express Tribune, October 7, 2012

GILGIT: With the duration of power outages gradually increasing, people in Gilgit fear that the coming winter might be as worse as the last one. Locals stated they were facing around two hours of power outages a day, but with the start of October the load shedding hours have doubled. "Power goes out for hours sometimes four times a day; if the situation is so bad in the early days of October, just imagine how bad it will be in December and January," stated Mujahid, a resident of Gilgit.

Power outages in Gilgit intensified last year after the area's main water reservoir developed fissures and the 18-megawatt Naltar hydropower station had to be shut down to repair the leakage. Power supply to Gilgit was suspended twice, for over one week each time, bringing life to a standstill.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/448078/g-b-electricity-woes-winter-is-coming-and-outages-are-getting-worse/>

Shabbir Mir, Threatened species: 34 turtles seized near Pak-China border

The Express Tribune, October 7, 2012

GILGIT: The Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) forest department has seized 34 endangered turtles being smuggled into China. The turtles were seized from the luggage of a Chinese national at a check post in Sost near the Pak-China border, Wildlife Conservator Wilayat Noor stated on October 6. He stated the Chinese national, Chuch Bin, has been arrested and the turtles have been transported to Gilgit. "It is a big achievement as we have recovered all the turtles alive. I appreciate the efforts of all those who made it possible," stated Noor.

Pervaiz Iqbal, a border guard of the G-B forest department, stated the Chinese national's luggage was checked on October 4 after his behaviour "seemed suspicious". Upon inspection, they found the turtles hidden in cardboard boxes and bags. Rehmat Ali, a senior conservationist at WWF Gilgit office stated the man was taken into custody and presented before the court of a civil judge in Hunza. The judge indicted the Chinese national and fined him Rs 2,000 under the Wildlife Act of 1975.

Investigation revealed that the accused spent nearly three months in Rawalpindi, picking up the turtles from various areas of the Pothohar region, including the Kallar Kahar Lake. "These are the freshwater turtles found in the Pothohar region of Pakistan," stated Babar Khan, the head of World Wide Fund for Nature in G-B.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/448067/threatened-species-34-turtles-seized-near-pak-china-border/>

Shabbir Mir, Rapid construction: In Gilgit, lesser and lesser land to grow crops

The Express Tribune, October 1, 2012

GILGIT: Gilgit is fast losing its fertile land to urbanisation. Residents who once produced an excess of wheat and maize say there is not enough land available to cultivate the crops on a large scale and they have no choice but to purchase them from down country.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/444980/rapid-construction-in-gilgit-lesser-and-lesser-land-to-grow-crops/>

Fact sheet on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

Total area of Jammu and Kashmir	222,236 sq kms
Area of under illegal Pakistani occupation (PoK = AJK + Gilgit Baltistan)	78114 sq kilometres
Area of J&K under Chinese occupation <i>Area ceded to China by Pakistan</i>	42,685 sq kms 5,130 sq kms
Together Pak-China	120,799 sq kms
Area with India	101437 sq kms

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: 5180 sq. kilometres (Area of Shaksgam Valley)

(Source: Jammu & Kashmir Government website at <http://www.jammukashmir.nic.in/>, accessed on November 14, 2010)

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)

Area: 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, Hattian

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

President: Sardar Yaqoob Khan

Prime Minister: Chaudhry Abdul Majeed

AJK Council: Total 12 members

AJK Legislative Assembly: Total seats are 49

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 Parties and 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)

(Source: Azad Jammu & Kashmir Government website at <http://www. www.ajk.gov.pk/>, accessed on November 14, 2010)

Gilgit-Baltistan

Area: 72,496 sq. kilometers

Population: 870,347 (1998 population census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: Seven

Baltistan Region (part of Ladakh) is divided into Ghanche 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

Gilgit-Baltistan Council: Total 15 members

Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly: Total 33 members (24 members directly elected)

Governor of G-B: Pir Karam Ali Shah

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

Political Parties and 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)

(Sources: Jammu & Kashmir Government website at <http://www.gilgitbaltistan.gov.pk>, & website of the Balwaristan National Front, <http://www.balawaristan.net>, accessed on November 14, 2010)

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.

POK NEWS DIGEST



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