

POK News Digest

Volume 9 | Number 10 | October 2016

A MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST ON PAKISTAN OCCUPIED KASHMIR

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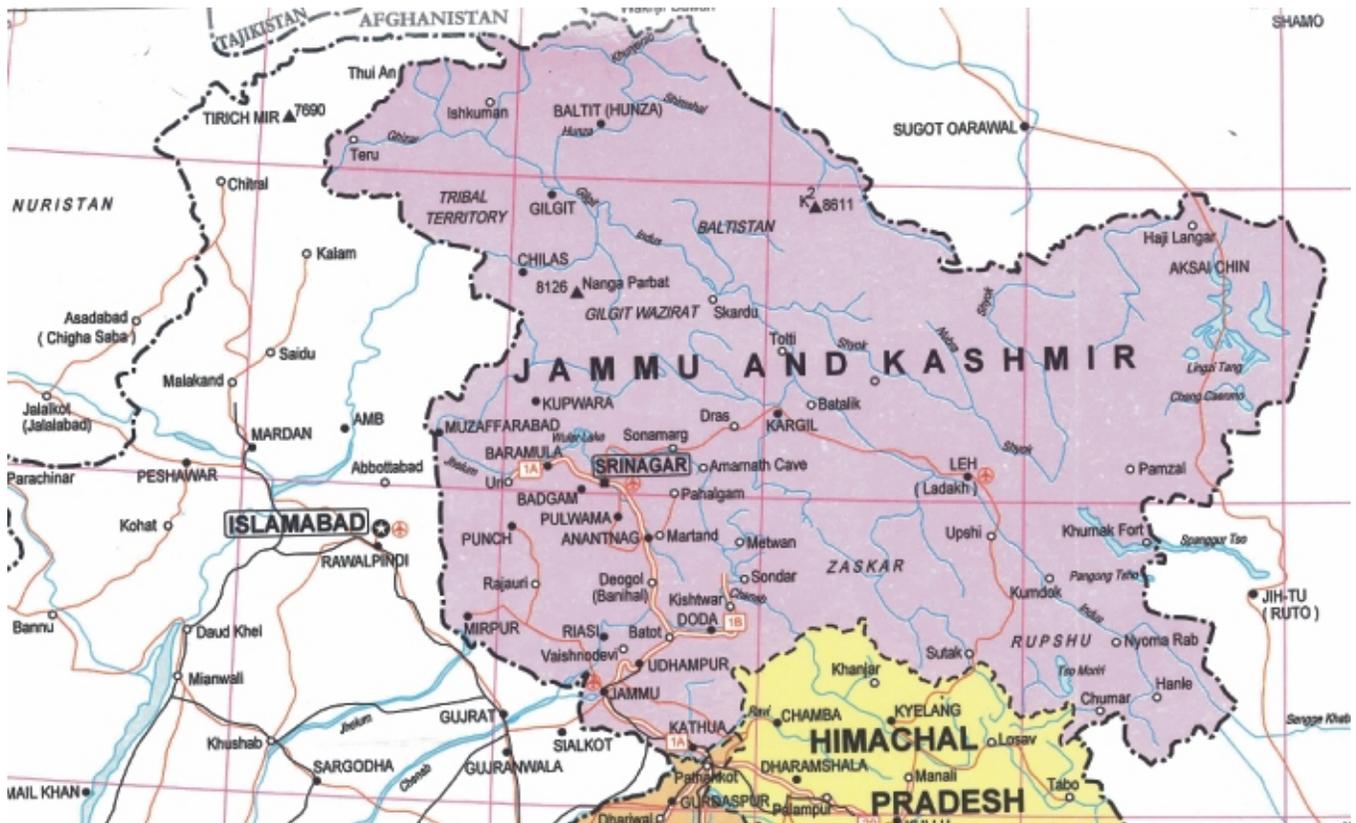
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Jammu & Kashmir

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

In this Edition

Lately, there have been certain positive signs as far as re-energising India's policy on PoK is concerned. India's stance on PoK over the years has been persistently charged of being subdued or passive. However, India's policy on PoK got a fresh boost with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day speech this year, wherein he explicitly mentioned PoK while expressing thanks towards people of the region. Many view the direct reference to PoK during the course of Prime Minister's speech as a breakaway from the past. For decades, India's policy on PoK placed the region within a somewhat narrow construct that was merely confined to raising intermittent objections to Chinese infrastructure building in parts of PoK or came about in response to Pakistan's quest towards political tampering in the region from time to time. Indian Prime Minister's reference to PoK was welcomed not only domestically but across the spectrum including prominent diasporic groups from the PoK region settled mostly in the western countries. Applauding Prime Minister Modi's initiative, an exiled leader from PoK noted that politics in PoK is totally subservient to Pakistan's whims and people there are not only debarred from exercising control over their resources but are also not allowed to participate in any kind of political decision making.

As indicated in several reports included in the current issue, there are growing apprehensions in PoK, especially Gilgit Baltistan, regarding the prospects of the upcoming China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The proposed corridor is slated to cross through Gilgit Baltistan-the only land link between Pakistan and China- before actually entering Pakistan. People in PoK are hugely concerned about their prospective share in the CPEC. Their misgivings have been exacerbated by the continuing political stalemate vis a vis unconstitutional status of Gilgit Baltistan and inability of the Pakistan government to convince the people on whether or not they would benefit from the connectivity corridor in some measure.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

“India Concerned Over China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Passing Through Kashmir”

Sputnik International, September 1, 2016

India expressed serious concern over China's ambitious economic corridor with Pakistan and stated that it passed through the Indian Territory. Vikas Swarup, spokesperson for the Indian Ministry of External Affairs stated, “In so far, as the China-Pakistan economic corridor is concerned, our position has been made very clear to both the parties concerned that it passes through Indian sovereign territory under Pakistan's illegal occupation. When we say PoK, it is exactly that is Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. It is part of Indian Territory and India would obviously be concerned about any project happening there with any third party collaboration.” Meanwhile, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying was quoted as saying, “We are well aware of these concerns but as has been stated before, this China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a platform for long term development.

It targets no third country and we strongly believe that this corridor will work for connectivity, regional peace and development. Our position on the Kashmir issue is consistent. This issue is left-over from history between India and Pakistan. It needs to be resolved between India and Pakistan through consultation.” The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a 46 billion dollar infrastructure project that intends to link Xinjiang province, China to Gwadar port, Pakistan, near the Iranian border. China has not disclosed the details of the project, but stated that several road, rail and power projects are planned for the corridor.

<https://sputniknews.com/politics/20160901/1044861488/india-kashmir-corridor.html>

“AJK President for Unity among Political Leadership”

Business Reader, September 2, 2016

The President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Muhammad Masood Khan emphasized on political leadership of Kashmir to create unity among their ranks for the progress towards resolution of Kashmir issue. Addressing his first ever public gathering at his ancestral town Rawalakot on September 1, the President was of the view that the goal of liberation could only be achieved if the whole political leadership of occupied and Azad Kashmir would be on one page. "We can force the security Council and other forums to implement the resolution on Kashmir through unified efforts and for the sake of our sacred and greater cause, all the political forces would have to unite," the President stated. While paying rich tribute to founder leaders of Azad Kashmir Chudary Ghulam Abbas, Sardar Muhammad Ibrhaim and Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan, he noted they made their best efforts during their tenures for the liberation of occupied territory.

<http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/front-top/316538-ajk-president-for-unity-among-political-leadership.html>

“AJK a 'thorn in India's flesh': Indian air chief”

The Express Tribune, September 2, 2016

India's Air Force chief on September 1 called Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) 'a thorn in India's flesh' as he rued Indian reluctance to use air power which could have helped it wrest control of the valley. Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha at an aerospace seminar in New Delhi stated that India did not follow a “pragmatic approach” to security needs, as reported. “Our foreign policy was enshrined in the charter of the UN, charter of the Non-Alignment Movement as well as Panchseel doctrine,” he noted while referring to the 1971 Pakistan-India war. “We have

been governed by high ideals and we really did not follow a very pragmatic approach, to my mind, to security needs. To that extent, we did ignore the role of the military power to maintain conducive environment.” He suggested that New Delhi was 'reluctant' to use military power, especially the air force, in deterring adversaries. “And when a military solution was in sight, taking moral high ground, I think we went to UN for a peaceful solution to this problem,” Air Chief Marshal Raha stated, adding, “The problem still continues. [AJK] remains a thorn in our flesh today.”

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1174483/ajk-thorn-indias-flesh-indian-air-chief/>

“GOVT Committed to serve Masses with Missionary Zeal: AJK PM”

Radio Pakistan, September 2, 2016

AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan stated that tangible measures would be taken to improve the functioning of governmental institutions in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Talking to journalists in Muzaffarabad on September 2, he noted the government is committed to serve the masses with missionary zeal. Raja Farooq Haider urged the journalist fraternity to highlight the genuine issues of public. Meanwhile, presiding over a meeting in Muzaffarabad on September 2, the AJK PM directed the authorities concerned to functionalize the Cadet College Muzaffarabad as soon as possible.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/02-Sep-2016/govt-committed-to-serve-masses-with-missionary-zeal-ajk-pm>

“Load shedding issue to be resolved soon: Farooq”

Daily Times, September 3, 2016

The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu Kashmir Raja Farooq Haider stated that the load shedding issue had been raised with federal government and to be resolved soon. He was talking to a delegation of Central trade Union Muzaffarabad on September 3. He stated that the government was planning to build a new Truck Stand, Fruit Market, Slaughter House and construction of Circular Road in the capital. The PM asserted that voice would be raised on

every forum for the provision of funds for the reconstruction projects in Azad Kashmir and those funds would be reimbursed which were moved from here in previous regime and these issues were to be discussed with federal government. He also stated that the directions have been issued for the constructions of safety wall for the water treatment plant at Makri.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/03-Sep-16/load-shedding-issue-to-be-resolved-soon-farooq>

“G-B Expressway to be the highest in world”

The Express Tribune, September 4, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan Expressway costing Rs82 billion would be the highest road in the world and bring economic revolution in the entire region, announced Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Hafeezur Rahman. “An expressway costing Rs50 billion from Gilgit to Skardu will facilitate people of G-B and another from Islamabad to G-B needing capital injection of Rs82 billion will be constructed under the CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor),” he noted. “The proposed Shonter-Astore road will reduce the distance between Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and G-B by several hundred kilometres and also cut travel time between the two regions,” he added. Moreover, the road linkage projects will not only boost trade activities in the G-B region but will also help carry agricultural produce of the area to various parts of the country.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1175568/ushering-prosperity-g-b-expressway-highest-world/>

“Govt Taking Revolutionary Steps for GB Development: Barjees”

Radio Pakistan, September 4, 2016

Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Chaudhry Muhammad Barjees Tahir says the government is taking revolutionary steps for the development of Gilgit-Baltistan. Barjees Tahir stated that the Federal Government allocated billions of rupees for development and welfare projects like hospitals and universities in the area. He also stated that the government is planning to establish a cardiology center in Gilgit and Baltistan

University in Skardu. The minister noted that the government will soon announce 30-year forest working plan, timber policy and tourism policy for Gilgit-Baltistan. Meanwhile, addressing prize distribution ceremony of a Kabaddi tournament in Sheikhpura on September 4, the Minister stated terrorism has been controlled to a considerable level as a result of effective government policies and operation Zarb-e-Azb sacrifices of the security forces. He also stated the government's writ has been established in FATA and Balochistan, and healthy activities, including sports, are taking place there.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/04-Sep-2016/govt-taking-revolutionary-steps-for-gb-development-barjees>

“Govt fails to rehabilitate AJK schools despite lapse of 11 years”

Daily Times, September 4, 2016

Rehabilitation work in over 2,000 schools and colleges, which were destroyed in the deadly earthquake in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, is yet to commence despite the lapse of 11 years. As many as 2,900 schools and colleges were devastated during the disastrous earthquake that struck AJK on October 8, 2005.

The extended aid from international donors for renovation and reconstruction of schools ran into millions of rupees but the rehabilitation and reconstruction work of the destroyed schools and colleges has still not started. Giving briefing to National Assembly's (NA) Standing Committee on Kashmir Affairs, the AJK finance secretary claimed that reconstruction of 700 schools has been completed, while construction work on 1,243 schools was underway. He also stated that Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) provided assistance to the AJK government for construction of schools. There were around 1,000 schools wherein construction work has not been started due to lack of funds, he added. The NA committee summoned ERRA in next meeting to explain the situation, as the AJK finance secretary failed to give satisfactory replies in terms of utilisation of funds collected from international

donors. ERRA would be questioned about the use of funds.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/islamabad/04-Sep-16/govt-fails-to-rehabilitate-ajk-schools-despite-lapse-of-11-years>

“NFC: Siraj urges government to include AJK, G-B”

Business Recorder, September 6, 2016

Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Chief Siraj-ul-Haq urged the federal government to fix share of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K) and Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) in National Finance Commission (NFC) Award to remove sense of deprivation among the people of the regions. Addressing a press conference along with JI Azad Kashmir Amir Abdul Rasheed Turabi and JI G-B Amir Maulana Abdul Sami on September 5, Haq stated that both the regions have no share in NFC and it was needed to fix their share in national resources as both the regions are playing a leading role in defense of the country. He also stated that by bringing them economically and socially at par with rest of the country will have positive impact on national economy as it will reduce urban migration activities as every year hundreds of thousand people from northern areas come to earn their livelihood in central parts. He further stated that people of AJ&K have serious reservations over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as no part of the region is included under the project. He noted that the JI was not satisfied with the G-B share in the project as it has the capacity to produce 41,000 Megawatts (MWs) of hydel electricity but other than roads no significant projects is being executed in the region.

<http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/82863/>

“Federal govt okays Rs2.7 for new assembly building”

Pakistan Observer, September 6, 2016

AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan stated that federal government has approved Rs.2.7 billion for the construction of the new Assembly building. Addressing a high level meeting of Planning & Development Department on September 5 the Prime Minister stated that

development process in AJK will be fostered as financial resources were not an issue to manage, federal government would provide every possible funds to Azad Kashmir government in this regard. He stated monitoring system of development projects would be made more effective so sources could be used better for welfare of the people. “Financial discipline would be ensured in all institutions to save the resources,” he noted. The Prime Minister stated that Reforms would be introduced in education, health, tourism, hydro, Infrastructure and other sectors to create employment opportunities. Additional Chief Secretary (development) Syed Asif Shah, secretary planning & development Mansoor Qadir Dar and other senior officials attended the meeting.

<http://pakobserver.net/federal-govt-okays-rs2-7-for-new-assembly-building/>

“PAK-China Optic Fiber Cable Project to be Completed by June 2018”

Business Recorder, September 6, 2016

The 820-kilometer long Pak-China optic fiber cable project from Rawalpindi to Khunjerab would be completed at a cost of US\$ 44 million by June 2018. After completion of this important project of Information Technology (IT) under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would convert trade corridor into digital corridor. This project is being completed in collaboration between China's Huawei and Special Communication Organization (SCO), Senior Project Manager, SCO, Muhammad Adil noted. He informed that this project would be beneficial for strategic link between both Pakistan and China. This project would not only generate revenue but it would also be a safest route of voice traffic between the two countries, he added. Muhammad Adil stated, the Pak-China fiber optic fiber cable would provide an alternate source for the world trade. He hoped that awareness about trade, tourism and Information Technology (IT) would create economic opportunities in Gilgit- Baltistan (GB).

<http://www.brecorder.com/pakistan/industries-a-sectors/316989-pak-china-optic-fiber-cable-project-to-be-completed-by-june-2018.html>

Farooq Sulehria, “Provincialising AJK”

The News, September, 7, 2016

With the election of Masood Khan as the president of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) on August 16, preceded by the elections for the legislative assembly last month, the façade of yet another 'democratically' elected government is complete. The contempt for democracy in AJK was starkly expressed in the way Masood Khan, a former diplomat from the Rawalakot district, was nominated in violation of every electoral and legal norm of the state. According to AJK press, Masood Khan's name was not in the electoral rolls. He did not hold 'state subject' (a certificate that one is a resident of the State of Jammu and Kashmir; his name was inducted in the electoral rolls with might and main. When the AJK High Court was moved to challenge his qualification, an interim verdict was quickly given in Khan's favour. As AJK president, Sardar Ibrahim moved the court against his dismissal as president by the Zia regime in 1978. It took the honourable court 13 long years to invalidate Ibrahim's dismissal. One must perhaps not blame the court.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/148366-Provincialising-AJK>

“Defence Day a milestone in national history, say AJK PM, President”

The Nation, September 6, 2016

Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Masood Khan and Prime minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan have stated the Defence Day of Pakistan is a milestone in the national history. On this day the armed forces proved to the aggressor that the Pakistani nation is never unaware of its defence. In their respective messages on Defence Day of Pakistan, the AJK President and Premier noted that today the country stands at crossroads facing multiple challenges from inside and outside. Masood Khan noted in his message that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are fighting for independence from Indian occupation, which is in fact a war for the defence of Pakistan. Kashmiris will continue sacrificing their lives till they get destination of accession to Pakistan, he further noted. The AJK PM emphasized national unity. “Present challenges to home land demand national unity, self-reliance, political stability and

professional preparedness of the armed forces,” he pointed out. “We are happy that the armed forces have achieved significant gains in the Operation Zarb-e-Azb,” he stated.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/06-Sep-2016/defence-day-a-milestone-in-national-history-say-ajk-pm-president>

Mushtaq Ghumman, “Land compensation: government decides to alter PC-1 of Diamer-Bhasha dam”

Business Recorder, September 7, 2016

The Federal government reportedly decided to alter PC-I of Diamer-Bhasha dam slightly and ensure payment of land compensation to the stakeholders in the light of an agreement signed on February, 2010, official sources noted. The federal government allocated Rs 32 billion under Public Sector Development Programme for the year 2016-17 for construction of Diamer-Bhasha Dam. Upon completion of the Diamer-Bhasha dam, Pakistan's existing 30-day water storage capacity would reach 90 days.

Diamer-Bhasha Dam is one of the most important energy projects in the country as it would not only generate 4,500 MW of electricity but would also serve as a huge water reservoir for the country. The cost of the project has touched \$12 billion and it is difficult for any country or lending agency to finance the project single-handedly. The sources noted that the government of Gilgit Baltistan has revealed that the land acquisition process for Diamer Bhasha Dam is in its final phase which will be completed soon. In the meanwhile, land acquisition collector Diamer Bhasha Dam has sought some clarifications regarding compensation rates of barren land of Chilas being acquired for Diamer Bhasha dam project. In order to resolve the issue, Chief Minister, Gilgit-Baltistan requested the Minister for Kashmir Affairs' intervention. In response to his request, a series of meetings was held in the Ministry. The final meeting in this regard was held on May 4, 2016.

<http://www.brecorder.com/market-data/stocks-a-bonds/0/83066/>

“APHC-AJK welcomes General Raheel's

statement on Kashmir”

Kashmir Media Service, September 7, 2016

The All Parties Hurriyet Conference Azad Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter welcomed the statement of Army Chief General Raheel Sharif in which he while describing Jammu and Kashmir as a jugular vein of Pakistan called for settlement of the Kashmir dispute as per the UN resolutions. The APHC-AJK chapter during a meeting in Islamabad noted that the Army Chief's statement that Pakistan would continue moral and diplomatic support to the oppressed people of Kashmir had encouraged the Kashmiris, who are the worst victims of Indian state terrorism. The leaders stated that the remarks were a true reflection of the sentiments of the Pakistani people. They also stated that the name of General Raheel Sharif would be written with golden words in the history for adopting an unambiguous stance on the Kashmir dispute.

<http://www.kmsnews.org/news/2016/09/07/aphc-ajk-welcomes-general-raheels-statement-on-kashmir.html>

“Report on AJK refugees ownership rights finalised”

The News, September 8, 2016

A meeting of special committee to review the issues regarding the grant of proprietary rights to the refugees belonging to Azad Jammu and Kashmir was held in Civil Secretariat on September 7. Punjab Additional Chief Secretary Shamail Ahmad Khawaja chaired the meeting. The meeting was informed that the special committee had finalised its report in which the recommendation had been made to extend the final date for grant of proprietary rights of Evacuee Rural Agricultural Land available in the districts of Sialkot, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Jhelum, Rawalpindi and Attock at the rate of Rs 1,000 per PIU (unit). The offer to get proprietary rights till December 31, 2016, will be extended to only those 493 families of Jammu and Kashmir refugees who had already filed references to avail the grant of proprietary rights. The special committee has also recommended to the Punjab chief minister to constitute sub-committees in the administrative divisions of Rawalpindi and

Gujranwala under the chairmanship of the divisional commissioners concerned to hear the references for settlement of all these references. The sub-committees will comprise the district coordination officer, revenue additional commissioner and a senior representative of the Board of Revenue, Punjab. Senior member of BoR will inform both commissioners about policy framework and SoPs in this regard and initiate a summary for approval of the chief minister.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/148653-Report-on-AJK-refugees-ownership-rights-finalised>

“Comprehensive Strategy Evolved to Overcome Energy Crisis in AJK: Haider”

Radio Pakistan, September 8, 2016

The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider stated that a comprehensive strategy has been evolved to overcome the energy crisis in the state. He was addressing a workshop held in connection with provision of low cost and sustainable energy in AJK in Muzaffarabad on September 8. Raja Farooq Haider Khan noted that Azad Kashmir has a vast the potential of hydropower generation to produce eight thousand megawatt electricity.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/08-Sep-2016/comprehensive-strategy-evolved-to-overcome-energy-crisis-in-ajk-haider>

“Committee formed to propose amendments in AJK 1974 Act”

Pakistan Observer, September 9, 2016

The joint sitting of AJK Legislative Assembly and Kashmir Council on September 8 constituted a committee to propose amendments in the interim constitutional act 1974. The sitting continued second consecutive day under the chairmanship of deputy speaker Sardar Farooq Tahir. The constitutional amendment committee under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Kashmir affairs Ch Barjees Tahir comprises on AJK's senior Minister Ch. Tariq Farooq, Law Minister Raja Muhammad Nisar, Minister education Barrister Iftikhar Gilani, Members legislative Assembly Malik Muhammad Nawaz, Hafiz Hamid Raza, Abdul Majid Khan and member Kashmir Council

Mukhtar Ahmad Abbasi.

<http://pakobserver.net/committee-formed-to-propose-amendments-in-ajk-1974-act/>

“CPEC has detrimental effects on Gilgit Baltistan environment: JKIPA”

Zee News, September 9, 2016

A conference held under the aegis of Jammu Kashmir International People's Alliance (JKIPA) passed resolutions demanding declaration of Jammu and Kashmir as indispensable political entity, while also pointing out that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has detrimental effects on Gilgit Baltistan environment. The JKIPA in a statement revealed the resolutions that were passed during the meeting held on September 6 in Brussels, Belgium. Declare that state of Jammu and Kashmir is indispensable political entity that comprises the areas of Gilgit Baltistan, Jammu, Ladakh, Kashmir valley and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) including the area which is handed over to the People's Republic of China by Pakistan, the statement noted. During the meeting, the alliance endorsed that only institutions of dialogue can pitch an amicable solution of the Jammu and Kashmir issue.

Asserting that the CPEC has detrimental effects on Gilgit Baltistan environment, the meeting also highlighted that neighbouring countries are colonizing natural resources of Gilgit Baltistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). "Herald both Pakistan and China that the project of their geo strategic interest is destroying ecosystem and livelihood of vulnerable communities," the statement noted. The JKIPA also demanded that a provision should be incorporated in the agreement that future government of the state of Jammu and Kashmir shall have a right to negotiate new terms with the respective governments of Pakistan and China on the CPEC. "Demand that since the China, Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is being built through a disputed region, therefore, a provision should be incorporated in the agreement that future government of the state of Jammu and Kashmir shall have a right to negotiate new terms with the respective governments of Pakistan and China," the

statement further noted.

http://zeenews.india.com/news/jammu-and-kashmir/cpec-has-detrimental-effects-on-gilgit-baltistan-environment-jkpa_1926980.html

“Religious Seminaries Being Regarded to Stop Sectarian Conflicts in AJK: Haider”

Radio Pakistan, September 9, 2016

The AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan noted religious seminaries are being registered to stop sectarian conflicts and other extremist practices in Azad Kashmir. He was addressing a briefing by officials of National Counter Terrorism Authority in Muzaffarabad on September 9. Raja Farooq Haider Khan expressed satisfaction over the security and law and order situation in the state. He also stated that terrorism has caused huge loss to the country but due to the effective policies of Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Army Chief General Raheel Sharif terrorism incidents have been significantly reduced. Chairman NCTA Ihsan Ghani, AJK Inspector General Police Bashir Memon, Additional Chief Secretary (General) Farhat Ali Mir and others concerned officials attended the meeting.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/09-Sep-2016/religious-seminaries-being-registered-to-stop-sectarian-conflicts-in-ajk-haider>

“Polling for by-election in Gilgit-Baltistan constituency LA-6 Hunza underway”

Dunya News, September 10, 2016

Polling for by-election in Gilgit-Baltistan constituency LA-6 Hunza was underway on September 10. As many as 64 polling stations have been formed among which 22 stations are combine in which both males and females can cast vote. Sources noted that 36,392 people would exercise their vote in the electoral process while a strong contest has been reported between Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Shah Saleem and Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) Wazir Khan Baig. On the other hand, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) Aziz Ahmed, independent candidate Obaidullah Beg and Naik Naam Kareem are also participating in the election. The security has also been tightened up as local administration has deployed Gilgit-

Baltistan Scout and police officers. The seat fell vacant after Ghazanfar Ali Khan became governor.

<http://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/352825-Polling-for-by-election-in-GilgitBaltistan-consti>

“AJK bans Indian TV channels”

The Nation, September 11, 2016

The AJK on September 10 imposed a complete ban on airing programs of all Indian TV channels directly-via-satellite or through local cable network. “Yes, all type of programs of Indian TV Channels have been banned by the AJK government across the state with immediate effect to express resentment against India for unleashing the reign of violence and state terrorism against innocent Kashmiri brethren in the Jammu & Kashmir, official sources noted on September 10. The authorities announced the decision at an emergent meeting of the local cable operators, chaired by Mirpur Sub Divisional Magistrate - AC Raja Qaiser Aurangzeb Khan in his office on September 10. Addressing meeting of the cable operators and private FM Channels, the Mirpur AC stated that in light of the decision of the Apex Committee, the AJK government has decided, under ongoing National Action Plan, a ban on all times of the Indian TV channels including the Hindi-language dubbed programs of news and current affairs, entertainment, cartoons and national geographic.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/11-Sep-2016/ajk-bans-indian-tv-channels>

“Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan to get economic zones under CPEC”

The Nation, September 11, 2016

Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal stated on September 11 that five to seven economic zones will be established across the country under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. In an interview to Radio Pakistan, the minister stated that every province and region, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir, will get at least one economic zone. Ahsan Iqbal also stated that all the provincial governments have been asked to identify the economically-feasible and attractive places for building economic zones. To a question, the

minister noted Balochistan will prove as a trade corridor for the region and the locals will get maximum benefits through employment opportunities and economic growth. To another question, Ahsan Iqbal further noted that all the stakeholders are supporting CPEC. He added that the work on the western route of the corridor is under way on priority basis.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/11-Sep-2016/azad-kashmir-gilgit-baltistan-to-get-economic-zones-under-cpec>

Meraj Alam, “Efforts on to protect environment: GB CM”

The Nation, September 12, 2016

Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Hafiz Hafeezur Rehman has stated that the government is working to protect environment, wildlife and natural beauty like forests and glaciers in Gilgit Baltistan. Addressing cheques distribution ceremony to stakeholders' of community based conservation organizations on September 11, the chief minister stated that the GB government had acquired land for LPG air mix plant. The step was taken to minimize the usage of wood as people in the region cut trees in forests to use it for heat in winter season. He appreciated the efforts of the Department, NGOs and communities in safeguarding and sustainable management of wildlife of the region. Ghulam Muhammad, Conservator Parks and Wildlife Department, GB, in his speech thanked the chief minister and other participants to join hands with the department in raising awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation. Meanwhile, the Gilgit-Baltistan wildlife department was issued permits for 4 markhors, 80 ibexes and 14 blue sheep for trophy hunting game through bidding system.

<http://nation.com.pk/newspaper-picks/12-Sep-2016/efforts-on-to-protect-environment-gb-cm>

“Will inform UN about Pak atrocities in Gilgit-Baltistan: Senge Sering”

New Kerala, September 13, 2016

Maintaining that people of Gilgit-Baltistan are deprived of their basis rights, Senge H Sering, Director of Gilgit-Baltistan National Congress

stated that he would try his best to inform the United Nations about the human rights violation and atrocities carried out by Pakistan in the region. "We will try to tell the member states of the UN that how the people in Gilgit Baltistan are deprived of their rights and no Constitutional institutions are being given to them by Pakistan. It is done so that the lands can be grabbed, the identity be reduced to minority or attack be made on their identity," Sering noted. Pointing out that in Gilgit-Baltistan there is mass land grabbing going on and people are being displaced on a large level, Sering stated that in the next two years the density will only increase, adding the issue of land rights and water issues in Gilgit Baltistan and the rights that they have on it will be raised before the UN. He was also of the opinion that the issue of Gilgit-Baltistan gets overshadowed by Pakistan raising the issue of Kashmir.

<http://www.newkerala.com/news/2016/fullnews-118400.html>

Syed Sammer Abbas, “PM Nawaz to take Kashmiri leadership on board before UN session”

Dawn, September 16, 2016

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will take Hurriyat and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) leaders on board for his speech in the United Nations General Assembly later this month. “Prime Minister Nawaz will visit Muzaffarabad on September 16 before leaving for New York. He will consult the Kashmiri leadership regarding his speech at the UN session,” AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider informed the media.

Nawaz will hold separate meetings with AJK legislators and with a delegation of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, AJK chapter. The prime minister will take the Kashmiri leadership into confidence over the content of his speech to be delivered at the UN General Assembly session on September 21. Welcoming the decision, AJK PM Raja Farooq Haider noted the gesture would send a positive message across the Line of Control (LoC).

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1283933/pm-nawaz-to-take-kashmiri-leadership-on-board-before-un-session>

Madeeha Zuberi, “PM arrives in Muzaffarabad”

Aaj News, September 16, 2016

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on September 16 arrived in Azad Kashmir's capital Muzaffarabad to meet leaders of Hurriyat Conference. Azad Kashmir's President Sardar Masood Khan and Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider received Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on his arrival. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Pervaiz Rashid, Minister for Kashmir Affairs Barjees Tahir, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Tariq Fatemi and Dr Asif Kirmani. The Prime Minister's meeting with Kashmiri leaders is being held before his upcoming visit to New York where he will raise the issue of Jammu and Kashmir at the forum of United Nations' General Assembly.

<http://aaj.tv/2016/09/pm-arrives-in-muzaffarabad-to-meet-hurriyat-leaders/>

Shabbir Mir, “Fight for rights: Committee vows to continue struggle for G-B's share in CPEC”

The Express Tribune, September 17, 2016

Undeterred over their arrest, leaders of Awami Action Committee (AAC) on September 16 vowed to continue their struggle for Gilgit-Baltistan's share in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. “We aren't going to budge an inch from our stance,” stated Sultan Raees, who heads the AAC. This is an alliance of various small religious and nationalist parties. Raees was among those arrested recently over sedition charges for organising a shutdown strike on India's Independence Day. He was, however, released as the government later withdrew the charges. “What we want is G-B's due share in CPEC and that's not a crime,” noted Raees who was addressing a news conference along with a dozen other members of AAC. The AAC leader stated the army chief, who also participated in a seminar over CPEC held recently in Gilgit, did not utter a word about G-B's share during the moot.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1182817/fight-rights-committee-vows-continue-struggle-g-bs-share-cpec/>

“Gilgit-Baltistan political workers accused of

treason for raising voice against land grab by Pak military: Senge”

Business Standard, September 19, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan National Congress President Senge Hasnan Sering has stated that many political workers in Gilgit-Baltistan have been fined and imprisoned on charges of treason and sedition for raising voice against forced land grabbing by the Pakistani military in the region. At his remarks at an event on 'Violence in South Asia,' Sering noted, "I would like to dedicate every minute of my time to all those political workers who are in jail in Gilgit-Baltistan right now in Pakistani occupation. Many of them have received life imprisonment of up to 40 years plus fined half a million rupees as a punishment for talking about land grab that Pakistani military is doing in Gilgit-Baltistan." He also stated that thousands of acres of land have been forcibly confiscated in Gilgit-Baltistan by driving women and children out of their homes. "In the middle of the night, bulldozers have destroyed and razed their houses and it has been going on in all parts of Gilgit-Baltistan," he added. He further stated that his speech is dedicated to all those people who have risked their and their family's lives to raise voice against these ongoing atrocities.

http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/gilgit-baltistan-political-workers-accused-of-treason-for-raising-voice-against-land-grab-by-pak-military-senge-116092000156_1.html

“After Uri attack, PIA cancels flights to Gilgit-Baltistan amid Indo-Pak tensions”

First Post, September 21, 2016

Pakistan's national flag carrier Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on September 21 cancelled flights to northern Pakistani cities due to "air space restrictions" in the wake of Uri terror attack. The PIA called off flights to Gilgit and Skardu in Gilgit-Baltistan region in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Chitral in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. "As per directives of CAA (Civil Aviation Authority), the air space over northern areas will remain closed on September 21. Inconvenience regretted," PIA spokesperson Danyal Gilani stated on Twitter. He did not give any reason for the closure of air space but officials stated

that Pakistani warplanes might be in the air to keep vigil due to Indo-Pak tensions after the Uri attack.

<http://www.firstpost.com/world/after-uri-attack-pia-cancels-flights-to-gilgit-baltistan-amid-indo-pak-tensions-3014420.html>

“AJK PM praises Nawaz for raising Kashmir issue at world forum”

The News, September 22, 2016

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Premier Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan appreciated Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for raising Kashmir issue forcefully and effectively at the world forum. He was accompanied by AJK Minister for Information Mushtaq Ahmed Minhas and Punjab Minister for Education Rana Mashhood. To a query, the AJK PM stated Kashmiris had full confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, adding that PM Nawaz had ably highlighted the Kashmir issue at the international level. Regarding the UN resolutions on Kashmir, Raja Farooq noted Kashmiris had the right to lead peaceful lives according to their own aspirations in the light of the resolutions by the United Nations. The AJK PM stated that India would never wage a war as huge financial losses were the price for it, adding that Kashmiris did not want a war with India as wars wreak havoc everywhere. Once imposed, the war could go beyond the use of traditional weapons of warfare, he noted.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/151603-AJK-PM-praises-Nawaz-for-raising-Kashmir-issue-at-world-forum#>

“Resolve Kashmir issue politically, Attique Ahmed”

Saudi Gazette, September 22, 2016

“It is my belief that the blood of six millions martyred Kashmiris cannot be wasted. No Pakistani government or any political force can remain in Pakistan or even in India who might have to deal with these martyred Kashmiris,” noted Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, president All Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference (AJ&KMC) and ex-prime minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K), while speaking at a press briefing with the members of Pakistan Journalist Forum (PJF) at Mehran restaurant recently. He also stated “Peace

talks between Pakistan and India could not be successful if the true Kashmiri leadership is not associated with the delegation or in the talks.” “Kashmir is a political issue. It should be solved politically. A military solution to the issue is dangerous for both countries. It will take the South Asian region to the brink of a nuclear war. The only solution is to resolve the issue with dialogue between Pakistan and India with the association of true Kashmiri leadership. In this regards, UN resolutions are the excellent road map to resolve the conflict,” he added.

<http://saudigazette.com.sa/saudi-arabia/resolve-kashmir-issue-politically-attique-ahmed/>

Meraj Alam, “Arrested terrorist handed over to Diamer police”

The Nation, September 22, 2016

The law enforcement agencies have arrested a high profile terrorist who was allegedly involved in killing of a religious leader Agha Ziauddin in Gilgit, sources informed on September 21. The terrorist, arrested from Rawalpindi, was identified as Maulvi Muhammad Nadeem and was later handed over to Diamer police, they added. They noted that a team of Investigation Bureau (IB) carried out an operation at Raja Bazaar, Rawalpindi, and arrested Nadeem, son of Abdul, Aziz, resident of Milmarig Astor. He was wanted in the 2005 murder case of religious leader Agha Ziauddin, Imam Jamia Imamia Gilgit. The terrorist had a head money of two million rupees and his name was in the Red Book serial no-2. A police team from Diamer headed by DSP Abdus Samad reached Rawalpindi and got custody of the terrorist. The sources also noted that Maulvi Nadeem would be given to City Police Station Gilgit for further action.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/22-Sep-2016/arrested-terrorist-handed-over-to-diamir-police>

“India staged Pathankot, Uri to avoid dialogue: AJK PM”

Samaa TV, September 22, 2016

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider stated on September 22 that India staged incidents like Pathankot and Uri to avoid dialogue. Addressing

lawyers at Lahore High Court Bar Association, he appreciated the role of lawyers for democracy promotion and noted that it was an honour for the legal fraternity that the Founder of the Nation was also a lawyer. He stated that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was a game-changer and it was a symbol of a strong Pakistan. He further stated that the project would create job opportunities and increase foreign reserves.

<http://www.samaa.tv/pakistan/2016/09/india-staged-pathankot-uri-to-avoid-dialogue-ajk-pm/>

“Wapda chief visits Diamer Basha dam, Dasu project sites”

The Nation, September 23, 2016

Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Chairman Lt Gen (r) Muzammil Hussain September 22 visited two mega hydro projects being implemented by WAPDA namely Diamer Basha Dam and Dasu Hydropower Project. Speaking on the occasion, the Wapda chairman stated that Diamer Basha Dam and Dasu Hydropower Project are of vital importance to meet the increasing requirement of water and electricity in the country. Although the process of land acquisition, preparatory works and infrastructure development in the projects' areas are continuing, it is all the more important to initiate construction work on main components of the two projects in the shortest possible time. Therefore, WAPDA has chalked out plans for initiation of main construction works on both projects as early as possible, the Chairman further stated. During his visit to Diamer Basha Dam, Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen Muzammil Hussain (R) had a detailed round of the dam site, the project colony at Thor and model village Harpan Das being developed for resettlement of the project's affectees. Chief Secretary Gilgit Baltistan Tahir Hussain also accompanied the chairman during the visit.

<http://nation.com.pk/business/23-Sep-2016/wapda-chief-visits-diamer-basha-dam-dasu-project-sites>

Sarfraz Ali, “PM Nawaz forcefully pleads Kashmir's case at UN: Masood Khan”

Daily Pakistan, September 23, 2016

President Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Masood

Khan on September 21 stated Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif fully represented the Kashmiri people and forcefully pleaded their case for a right to self-determination in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). “Kashmir issue is the bone of contention between Pakistan and India, therefore, the Prime Minister emphasised in his speech to resolve it as per wishes of the Kashmiri people and according to United Nations resolutions”, he stated while talking to Pakistani media persons at the UN headquarters. Masood further stated the prime minister's speech would have a positive impact as it keenly listened in the world.-

<https://en.dailypakistan.com.pk/pakistan/pm-nawaz-forcefully-pleads-kashmirs-case-at-un-masood-khan/>

“Kashmir violence: Pro-army rallies held in AJK”

The Express Tribune, September 24, 2016

Hundreds of people took to the streets of Muzaffarabad after Friday prayers to show their solidarity with the Pakistan Army and to protest against Indian aggression in the disputed territory across the Line of Control. The protesters raised anti-India and pro-army slogans. They hailed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif. Protesters marched from Airport Road to Zero Point Chowk. “We want to tell the Indian civil and military establishment that Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is not Myanmar. The people of Kashmir know how to defend their motherland along with Pakistan Army,” stated Hamid Jameel Kashmiri, a protestor participating in the rally.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1187308/kashmir-violence-pro-army-rallies-held-ajk/>

“Expat Facilitation Cells on the cards”

The Nation, September 25, 2016

The police inked an integrated plan to establish its Swift Expatriates Facilitation Cells in Azad Jammu and Kashmir to ensure quick help by the police to overseas Kashmiris settled in various parts of the world through registration of cases. This was disclosed by Inspector General of Police AJK Bashir Memon while addressing a gathering of

overseas Kashmiris and journalists belonging to Mirpur division at the office of DIG Police Mirpur Range. Author of the pilot project of the EFCs - DIG Sajaad Ahmed, DIG Police Range Sardar Gulfranz Khan, SSP Mirpur Raja Irfan Salim, SP Kotli Ch Munir Hussain and Additional SP Mirpur Mirza Zahid Hussain were also present to share their due input to materialise the plan. The audience including the Kashmiri expatriates, senior Kashmiri journalists tabled various proposals to materialise the establishment of proposed Expatriates Facilitation Cells of AJK Police with an objective and vibrant role at the Divisional and District Headquarters of AJK including Mirpur, Rawalakot and Muzaffarabad. Speaking on the occasion, IGP Bashir Memon noted that the plan has primarily been inked under the vision of AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan to ensure the delivery of quick service by the police to the Kashmiri expatriates sitting abroad or during the course of their visit to the homeland in connection with legal cases. "The e-mail-oriented service by the proposed EFCs will prove to be a strong source of the quick police service to any of the needy Kashmiri expatriates during their visit to the motherland or in the country they live in," Memon stated.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Sep-2016/expat-facilitation-cells-on-the-cards>

“PM Modi's statement on PoK, Gilgit-Baltistan a 'positive step': exiled PoK leader”

Business Standard, September 25, 2016

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi cautioning the people of Pakistan that their leaders were misleading them by talking about Kashmir when they could not even take care of the part of Kashmir under Pakistan's occupation, exiled Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) leader Mumtaz Khan on September 25 stated it is a positive step and statement regarding PoK and Gilgit-Baltistan, though it is late, and hoped it wasn't a tactical statement. Khan stated, "We have a government in PoK, but it has no powers and has no control over their resources, or on political decision making, or on other issues. And, it's not a new issue. I mean, the government we have has always been a kind of an extension or the proxy of the Pakistani political

parties. They don't talk about the empowerment of that area, the people, the region, and it is directly controlled by Pakistan, I mean, a few bureaucrats and the Minister for Kashmir Affairs and the military court commander sitting in Murree." "So, there are serious issues with respect to the PoK government and the region, and the political issues, and people have serious grievances against Islamabad. But unfortunately, it has never been taken by any other government internationally, because Indian Kashmir has always been in the limelight and our issues have been always neglected and ignored," he noted.

http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/pm-modi-s-statement-on-pok-gilgit-baltistan-a-positive-step-exiled-pok-leader-116092500063_1.html

Tariq Naqash, “PM asked to check 'corruption' in AJK Council”

The Dawn, September 26, 2016

The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) chapter of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) has called upon Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to take steps to arrest “corruption, favouritism and maladministration” in the AJK Council. Reminding the AJK leaders of the ruling party of their pre-election comments and commitments about the council, the PTI regretted that after coming to power they had eaten their words. “The AJK Council in general and its department of inland revenue in particular have become hotbed of corruption, favouritism and bad governance but the PML-N that had made people falsely believe that it would make AJK a model of good governance has turned a blind eye towards the affairs of the council,” stated Khawaja Farooq Ahmed, senior vice president of PTI in AJK, on September 25. The departments of Inland Revenue, audit and accounts fall under the administrative control of the council. The PTI leader stated owing to its “endemic corruption, abuse of powers and funds for political manoeuvring and disdainful attitude towards the Kashmiris” the council had become a metaphor of hatred among the people of the state. He also stated the council had a history of providing shelter to corrupt elements in the department of Inland Revenue.

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1286113/pm-asked-to-check->

Meraj Alam, “Prince Saleem takes oath as GBLA member”

The Nation, September 27, 2016

Prince Saleem was sworn in as a member of GBLA during assembly session held at the Governor House, Gilgit on September 26. Speaker Fida Muhamad Nashad called the 12th Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly session held at the Governor House Gilgit due to construction of the GBLA hall. Speaker Fida Muhammad Nashad administered oath to the new PML-N member. Prince Saleem is the son of Governor G-B and had been elected from GBLA-6 on September 10. Speaker GBLA, ministers and other members of GBLA congratulated Mir Saleem.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/27-Sep-2016/prince-saleem-takes-oath-as-gbla-member>

“Lord Nazir raps MDA, MC over corruption”

The Nation, September 27, 2016

Kashmir-born life time member of the British House of Lords, Lord Nazir Ahmed on September 26 bitterly criticized the Mirpur Development Authority and Mirpur Municipal Corporation over poor performance. “Instead of serving the public and providing them civic facilities, these institutions have become dens of corruption, malpractices, irregularities and bad governance.” He was speaking at a reception hosted in his honour by renowned UK-based NGO The Muslim Hands at its Mirpur office on September 26. Country Director The Muslim Hands in Mirpur, Arslaan Ahmed, Programmes Officer Syed Ibnul Hasan Gillani, Advisor Programme Arslan Nusrat and Media and Communication Officer Zeashan Mirza briefed Lord Nazir Ahmed on various social welfare projects launched by his organization in various parts of Pakistan and AJK. Elaborating on about the upcoming welfare projects, The Muslim Hands officials stated that in Mirpur, 18 water filtration plants have been installed with the assistance and coordination of the Municipal Corporation and the Public Health Engineering Department which have provided the required piece of lands and water supply facility for the plants. Centre for Peace

Development and Reforms Director Altaf Hamid Rao also spoke on the occasion and emphasised the need for transforming the public sector institutions in AJK into vibrant entities by getting rid of corrupt officials and political interference.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/27-Sep-2016/lord-nazir-raps-mda-mc-over-corruption>

Shabbir Mir, “Indian interest in Gilgit”

The Express Tribune, September 28, 2016

As the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) progresses, India has placed more focus on Gilgit-Baltistan in an attempt to exploit the undecided constitutional status haunting its people since decades. This could be the best India could do to a region that according to it is Indian Territory forcibly occupied by Pakistan. One can understand India is deeply upset over the multibillion dollar project which is believed to transform Pakistan's ailing economy, taking it ahead of India in the long run. And Gilgit is considered a soft target to achieve the goal; derail progress on the project. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech did mention Gilgit-along with Balochistan and Azad Kashmir and claimed the people from the areas thanked him 'for raising voice against human rights violations in the territory.' Whether the people in Gilgit thanked his government or not, it proved India's heightened interest in the Gilgit region bordering China. Gilgit serves as a gateway to the CPEC as it will pass through about 450 kilometres in Gilgit-Baltistan. Modi's words were not the first thing to make a reference to Gilgit nor were the last. Many others followed the suit to poke their nose into what they call human rights violations in Gilgit-Baltistan.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1190310/indian-interest-gilgit/>

“AJK President urges Indian government to negotiate for Kashmir's resolution”

Daily Times, September 29, 2016

President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Masood Khan stated that Kashmir was core reason for tension between India and Pakistan and therefore India must come to negotiation table for an out of the box solution of this issue. In an interview with Voice of America he noted, tension between Pakistan and

India was at peak after Uri attack therefore, UN, US and international community must make efforts to reduce it. He also stated that India had threatened to carry out surgical strikes but UN and international community should make efforts to stop India from taking any such action. Masood further stated that Pakistani diplomacy had been successful in convincing the international community on its stance on Kashmir and other regional issues.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/29-Sep-16/ajk-president-urges-indian-government-to-negotiate-for-kashmirs-resolution>

“Sunni volunteers to 'protect' Shia mourners in Gilgit-Baltistan”

The Express Tribune, September 30, 2016

In a sign of sectarian harmony, Sunni residents of Gilgit volunteered to escort mourning processions in the valley during Muharram. The development is seen as a major step towards bridging the sectarian divide in a region which has been plagued by sectarian violence in the recent past. “This is what we should do and we will do,” stated Shah Raees, a

resident of Gilgit's Amphery area on September 29. “We will be there to guard our brethren so that they can perform their rituals peacefully,” Raees added. He was speaking at a Muharram security meeting which was also attended by Shia elders and police officials. G-B has been peaceful for some time now though security forces have been on red alert, especially during Muharram. Intelligence reports in the past had suggested that a terrorist attack was possible.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1191016/sectarain-harmony-sunni-volunteers-protect-shia-mourners-gilgit-baltistan/>

Economic Developments

“Provincial Board of Investment to be established soon: HAFEEZ”

Radio Pakistan, September 5, 2016

Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Hafiz Hafeez Ur Rehman has stated provincial Board of Investment would be established soon to attract investors. Presiding over a meeting in Gilgit, he also stated that federal government has waived off tax on imports of machinery in Gilgit Baltistan and investor should take advantage from it. Chief Minister stated that a special cell of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor would be established in Planning and Development Department. He directed timely approval of PC-1 and setting up of Gilgit Baltistan Rural support program. Earlier, talking to Chairman Press Council of Pakistan, Dr Salahudin he noted that press foundation would be set up in Gilgit Baltistan for the betterment of journalists.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/05-Sep-2016/provincial-board-of-investment-to-be-established-soon-hafeez>

“GOVT will Give Incentives in Mine Sector: CM”

Radio Pakistan, September 7, 2016

Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Hafiz Hafeez-ur-Rehman noted that the government will give incentives to the investor in Mine sector. He was presiding a briefing session organized by Minerals department in Gilgit. The Chief Minister also stated that the government is taking steps to utilized minerals for socio economic development. He further stated that public private partnership in mineral sector would be encouraged for the maximum utilization of minerals in the region. He noted that while giving lease of minerals sites rights of the people of Gilgit Baltistan would be protected. The Chief Minister also stated that regional offices of minerals department would be established soon.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/07-Sep-2016/govt-will-give-incentives-to-investor-in-mine-sector-cm>

“Duty collection at Sost Border: MoF to explore possibility of giving share to G-B Council”

Business Recorder, September 13, 2016

The Ministry of Finance would explore the possibility of giving share from total customs duty collected by customs department at Sost Border to Gilgit-Baltistan Council. Sources noted on September 12 that the issue came to light during the last meeting of a committee for resolution of tax issues in Gilgit-Baltistan. Additional Secretary Finance on the issue of awarding 80 percent share from customs duty collected at Sost Border to Gilgit-Baltistan Council, informed the meeting that he will look into the issue and inform the Gilgit-Baltistan Council accordingly. Secretary-in-Charge Gilgit-Baltistan Council briefed the participants about the tax issues of Gilgit-Baltistan. He also invited attention towards the two options forwarded in the summary to Chairman Gilgit-Baltistan Council/Prime Minister. He also informed the members about the progress made in respect of statutory regulatory order (SROs)/Circulars to be issued by the FBR on the pattern of AJ&K. Secretary-in-Charge Gilgit-Baltistan Council also highlighted the income tax, sales tax and custom duties collected at Sost Border GB.

<http://www.brecorder.com/taxation/181/84915/>

Bank Alfalah, “SCO launch 'S-Paisa' service in AJK, GB”

Business Recorder, September 20, 2016

Taking a major stride toward its financial inclusion goals in the country, Bank Alfalah has joined hands with Special Communications Organisation (SCO) for the launch of its branchless banking service in Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. A brand envisioned as 'S-Paisa,' Bank Alfalah's

branchless banking offering is aimed to empower more than 6 million people of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan through state-of-the-art, convenient, and secure branchless banking service. The partnership with SCO will put Bank Alfalah's branchless banking services at the forefront in these regions, and will financially empower the un-banked in these vicinities. The contract signing ceremony was attended by Major General Amir Azeem Bajwa - DG SCO, Brigadier Muhammad Zaman - Deputy DG SCO, Brigadier Iftikhar Ul Wahab - Director Marketing & Regulatory Affairs SCO, Ms Mehreen Ahmed - Group Head, Retail South & New Initiatives Bank Alfalah, Rizwan Ata - Group Head Islamic Banking Group Bank Alfalah, Amaar Naveed Ikhlas - Head of Branchless Banking Bank Alfalah, and Syed Ammar Haider - Head of Sales & Distribution Bank Alfalah. With the launch of S-Paisa, people across Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan would be able to engage in money transfers (sending and receiving), payment of utility bills and performing mobile top-ups. Offering these basic over-the-counter services brings Bank Alfalah one step closer to financially empowering segments of the country where financial access was previously limited or unavailable.

<http://www.brecorder.com/money-a-banking/198/86303/>

Shabbir Mir, “Economic Transformation Initiative: Gilgit-Baltistan to make 50,000 acres of land cultivable”

The Express Tribune, September 27, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) government September 27 formally launched a \$120 million agriculture development project which would help irrigate around 50,000 acres of barren land in the mountainous region. The seven-year project, called the Economic Transformation Initiative, has been co-funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). “This is the biggest agri-development project of G-B and we are hopeful things will improve dramatically by the time project is completed,” stated G-B Chief Minister Hafeezur Rehman while inaugurating the

project. The initiative is expected to increase agricultural income of locals and provide employment for at least 100,000 rural households in the G-B. Over 90 per cent of the regions' population is primarily engaged in agriculture. Terming the project a revolution for G-B, Rehman stated once it is complete and farmers start producing wheat, the region will not have to go far to procure the golden grain.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1189779/economic-transformation-initiative-gilgit-baltistan-make-50000-acres-land-cultivable/>

“AJK govt will welcome tourist investment: Farooq”

Pakistan Observer, September 28, 2016

AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider stated that Azad Kashmir was very safe place to visit and enjoy the scenic beauty of the State. He also stated Azad Jammu and Kashmir has great potential of investing in tourism sector and his government was ready to provide facilities to the investors. While talking to the representatives of a private investor firm Empire Capital Dubai, on September 27, the PM stated that promotion of tourist activities could help in strengthening of national economy and putting the country on the road to progress and development. He further stated that tourism promoted soft image of a country at international level while national economy could also be strengthened through development of this sector. He noted that we also celebrated World Tourism Day and the purpose was promotion of tourism, exploration of new tourist spots and conservation of archaeological sites besides safety of tourists and provision of necessary facilities at tourist sites. The Prime Minister noted that World Tourism Day was also celebrated for the purpose of socio-economic development and bringing people closer. He stated that AJK provided an opportunity to tourists to see natural sights and ancient civilizations. He stated that Kashmir attracted tourists from all over the world. He also noted that tourist sites of Kashmir comprised fertile land and beautiful mountain ranges and this country was also famous for archaeological sites.

<http://pakobserver.net/ajk-govt-will-welcome-tourist-investment-farooq/>

Khaleeq Kiani, “Implementation pact for \$1.9bn Karot power project signed”

Dawn, September 29, 2016

The federal and Azad Jammu and Kashmir governments on September 28 signed an implementation agreement with a Chinese consortium for development and operation of \$1.98 billion Karot Hydropower Project on river Jhelum at a levelised tariff of 7.57 cents per unit for 30 years. The agreement was signed by Secretary Electricity of AJK government Fayyaz Abbasi, Managing Director of Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) Shah Jahan Mirza and Chief Executive Officer of Karot Power Company Sheng Zhendong. The 720-megawatt Karot Hydropower Project is a priority project of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to be completed in 2020. It has the capability to generate 3.249 billion units of clean electricity per year for the national grid. The project is being developed on a Build-Own-Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis at an estimated cost of

\$1.98bn including a development cost of \$1.698bn and interest during construction of \$243m by Karot Power Company Private Ltd, comprising of M/s Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd (TGSAIL) and Associated Technologies (Pvt) Ltd of Pakistan.

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1286749/implementation-pact-for-19bn-karot-power-project-signed>

International Developments

“US says it recognises Pakistan control over PaK, Gilgit-Baltistan”

Deccan Chronicle, September 1, 2016

The US appeared to be favouring status quo in Jammu and Kashmir and maintaining the Line of Control, but made it clear that it was entirely up to the two countries to determine the pace, scope and character of any discussions on Kashmir. "We acknowledge 'Azad' Jammu and Kashmir, as well as Gilgit Baltistan as territories governed by Pakistan. We acknowledge the 1972 Line of Control as separating the administration of Jammu and Kashmir," a State Department spokesman noted. The spokesperson was responding to a question on the US' position on Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) along with that of Gilgit Baltistan, which has been illegally occupied by Pakistan. Recently, India asked Pakistan to vacate the territory. The spokesperson insisted that there has been no change in America's policy on Kashmir. "As we have stated many times, our policy on Kashmir is this: The pace, scope, and character of any discussions on Kashmir is for the two sides to determine, but we support any and all positive steps India and Pakistan can take to forge closer relations," the official noted.

<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/world/america/010916/us-acknowledges-azad-jammu-and-kashmir-state-department.html>

“Growing Chinese presence in Pakistan raises concerns”

Bihar Prabha, September 17, 2016

The increasing Chinese presence in Pakistan due to the construction of highly publicized China-Pakistan Economic Corridor or CPEC, especially in the illegally occupied territories of Gilgit Baltistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir has led to growing concern about unemployment and large scale displacement of locals. Despite being the

gateway of the multi-billion dollars project, the investment in power projects for Gilgit Baltistan, which is faced with acute power shortage, is next to negligible. Even in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, the total investment in power projects is only \$1.8 billion dollars, the least among the other provinces of Pakistan. Apart from disproportionate distribution of funds, presence of Chinese workers has left the locals without jobs, hampering their economic development. The highest number of Chinese Nationals has been reported from northeastern Punjab province at 3,754 with allotment of 6,364 security personnel for their safety. Gwadar Port in Pakistan's least developed province of Balochistan plays a central role in the project. However, it has been allotted a total of 8 projects as compared to 176 in Punjab, 103 in Sindh and 19 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

<http://news.biharprabha.com/2016/09/growing-chinese-presence-in-pakistan-raises-concerns/>

“Exploitative Nature of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor Raised in the 33rd Session of the UNHRC”

Finance Yahoo, September 20, 2016

Friends of Gilgit Baltistan, an international organization set up by a few Members of the European Parliament, held a seminar on September 19, 2016 on the side-lines of the 33rd UNHRC session in Geneva, on the exploitative nature of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Gilgit Baltistan and Pakistan Administered Kashmir. The speakers included Alberto Cirio, Member of the European Parliament, Paulo Casaca, Executive Director, South Asia Democratic Forum, Junaid Qureshi, prominent Kashmiri human rights leader and Mehran Marri, Baloch Representative to the UN. Paulo Casaca moderated the seminar. During his speech, Paulo Casaca mentioned that though the CPEC has been termed by Pakistani

leaders as a game changer time and again, they had glossed over and failed to acknowledge the negative impacts of the project. He opined that though the government harped on the expected economic benefits of the CPEC, little attention was given to the fact that the CPEC would fail to provide economic benefits, including jobs, to the locals and instead only enrich a few. The CPEC, he stated, had become more of a project championed by the Pakistani government and its military to divert attention from all the failures of the civilian government in all other areas including human rights. Later, responding to an intervention, Casaca stated that the most worrying factors with regard to Pakistan was its support to cross border terrorism and there was an immediate need for this to stop as otherwise it would impact the security of not only South Asia but also the world.

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/exploitative-nature-china-pakistan-economic-101300540.html>

“Pakistan's Oppressed Peoples and Occupied Territories Demand Justice and Rule of Law”

UNPO, September 22, 2016

On 20 September 2016, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) joined forces with the Asian Legal Resource Centre and the Right Livelihood Award Foundation in a side-event to the 33rd Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council, at the Palais des Nations, in Geneva. Bringing together representatives from Pakistan's oppressed regions and occupied territories the event drew attention to Pakistan's deteriorating human rights record, including the systematic killing of lawyers. Moderated by Mr Baseer Naveed of the Asian Legal Resource Centre, the event heard speeches by representatives of Sindhi, Baloch, Gilgit-Baltistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Mr Lakhmal Luhana of the World Sindhi Congress stressed that the CPEC “is much more than an economic corridor... it is a game changer that will lead to the end of these nations [Baloch, Sindhi, Gilgit-Baltistan]” and warned that the implementation of the \$46 billion project will bring intensification to all existing conflicts in the region. Mr Mirza Wajahat Hassan, exiled Chairman of the

Gilgit-Baltistan Thinkers Forum, noted that “unfortunately very few people know that Gilgit-Baltistan is key to unlocking the Kashmir dispute”. Reminding also that Pakistan's security agencies have intensified their operations to brutally implement the CPEC, Mr Hassan noted that the indigenous peoples of Gilgit-Baltsitan do not have a single representative in the CPEC Committee.

<http://unpo.org/article/19493>

“No joint military exercise with Pakistan in PoK says Russia”

Deccan Herald, September 23, 2016

Russia tonight clarified that it was not holding any anti-terror exercise with Pakistan in "so-called Azad Kashmir" or in any other "sensitive or problematic areas like Gilgit and Baltistan". "The only venue of the exercise is Cherat. All reports alleging the drills taking place at the High Altitude Military School in Rattu are erroneous and mischievous," the Russian Embassy noted in a statement. "Contrary to some reports appearing in a section of the press, the Russia-Pakistan anti-terror exercise is not being held and will not be held in any point of so-called 'Azad Kashmir' or in any other sensitive or problematic areas like Gilgit and Baltistan," it noted. The statement assumes significance as there have been reports from Pakistan that a mechanised infantry unit of the Russian military arrived in Pakistan today to participate in the first-ever joint military drills dubbed 'Friendship-2016'. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Vikas Swarup stated that India's sensitivities towards Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism are well-known and same was also conveyed to its strategic partner, Russia.

<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/572131/not-holding-any-anti-terror.html>

“China assures support to Pakistan on Kashmir issue”

The Indian Express, September 24, 2016

With relations already running on a tense note between India and Pakistan over terrorism and rising tensions at borders, China has assured in

unequivocal terms of its support in case of any foreign aggression to Islamabad including its stance on the Kashmir issue. China's support was confirmed in a press release issued by the Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif's Office. "In case of any [foreign] aggression our country will extend its full support to Pakistan," the statement quoted Consul General of China in Lahore Yu Boren as saying. The message was conveyed during a meeting of its top diplomat in the provincial capital with Chief Minister Sharif. The statement further noted that Beijing "will be siding with Pakistan on Kashmir issue" and the Kashmir issue should be

solved in accordance with aspirations of the Kashmiris. The duo also discussed the progress being made on various projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/china-pakistan-kashmir-corridor-support-3047590/>

Other Developments

“Record 1m tourists visited GB during current year: Barjees”

The Nation, September 12, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan received record number of tourists of around one million during current year as compared to 0.6 million last year, registering a four percent increase. Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Ch Muhammad Barjees Tahir noted, “GB has a great potential for tourism as it has nine major peaks in the world which is main interest for the tourists”. “We are taking steps to improve tourism policy and road infrastructure, especially at GB-Skardu road on a priority basis to facilitate more tourists,” he informed. He also stated that the number of foreign tourists had exceeded from the past due to better law and order situation. “Local festivals played an important role in attracting the foreign tourists as the government and private organisations fully participated in the festivals not

only to make them successful but to also promote tourism in the country by making the northern areas a safe haven for the tourists,” he added. Barjees stated the Silk Route, linking the Central Asia to the world, offered unique opportunity to the youth of GB to show their art, culture and traditional heritage to the foreign world in order to open new avenues of trade and cultural exchange. He also noted tourism policy had been approved the previous year and the security was ensured for the tourists to enjoy in a peaceful manner.

<http://nation.com.pk/business/12-Sep-2016/record-1m-tourists-visited-gb-during-current-year-barjees>

Extracts From The Urdu Media

“What we got from the CPEC Conference”

Bang-e-Sahar, September 2, 2016

A three day conference on CPEC was held at Gilgit in which many federal ministers and army chief also participated. During the conference, federal minister Ahsan Iqbal stated that GB would be the first region who will get benefit from the CPEC. Iqbal further stated that CPEC will prove a game changer. He also appreciated GB Chief Minister for his participation and also for positively putting GB's case in the conference. Army Chief General Raheel Sharif in his address stated that people of GB are very intelligent and he believes that GB would be as prosperous as Urumqi of China because of the CPEC. He further stated that he wanted to see GB prospering. He also promised to open a branch of NUST University in GB. Besides, Skardu road would be extended, technical institutes would be opened and Gilgit would be made a medical city. He also stated that two divisions of forces are being raised to protect the CPEC. One division would safeguard the corridor from Khunjerab to Rawalpindi and the second one from Rawalpindi to Gwadar. He also stated that the road from Khunjerab to Rawalpindi is safe for the CPEC.

We were expecting the prime minister to attend this conference but he did not turn up even after accepting the invitation. One thing is obvious that the federal government is not clear and honest regarding the share of GB in CPEC. Ahsan Iqbal's reference on GB was like a political statement. Mushahid Hassan stated that both GB and Gwadar are two cornerstones of CPEC. There is nothing new in these statements. People were waiting that Ahsan Iqbal may talk about the two Economic Zones, Dry Port or other projects, roads, small dams that were earlier promised to be constructed in GB. Unfortunately there was nothing of this sorts. On the contrary, Raheel Sharif made more announcements

for the region than what Ahsan Iqbal said. Though it sounds good that GB would be made as prosperous as Urumqi. GB is now more peaceful than other parts of the country. Sectarianism has been almost controlled in GB. If there is peace, prosperity is possible. We should care more about peace and stability than the CPEC.

http://www.dailybangesahar.com/popup.php?r_date=09-02-2016&img=09-02-2016page-2-1

“People want Constitutional Identity not benefits from CPEC: Bibi Saleema”

Bang-e-Sahar, September 3, 2016

The three day conference on CPEC in Gilgit was nothing but to mislead people. The main reason behind this conference was to take input from people but it seems it was meant to thrust their agenda on the people of region. During the conference, neither suggestions were taken from representatives of the various political parties nor were opposition members taken into confidence. MWM member Bibi Saleema stated that during the three day conference nothing was said regarding the share of GB in this mega project i.e. the CPEC. She further noted that no one talked about the constitutional identity of GB. People of GB want constitutional identity rather than economic benefits of CPEC. People of region have been denied their identity over last seventy years. Statements from various federal ministers have upset the people of GB. During the conference, questions were allowed to be asked but there were no concrete and clear answers to them.

http://www.dailybangesahar.com/popup.php?r_date=09-03-2016&img=09-03-2016page-1-44

“Right now don't want to become a Chief Minister, Mir Saleem”

Baad-e-Shimal, September 18, 2016

Newly elected member from Hunza, Mir Saleem

Khan stated that despite many problems he won election because of full support from Prime Minister. He did not comment on how much provincial government played a role in his win. He noted that right now he is not focusing on becoming a chief minister, rather he wants to solve the issues with help of centre. He further stated that people of GB want change therefore it is necessary to reform the system. According to Saleem, the economic wheel in GB seems to have got stuck and it needs to get a push so that economic standards of people change. On the CPEC, he stated instead of talking on various forums all political parties and groups should get united and work together otherwise if we get divided we will get nothing.

http://www.dailybaadeshimal.com/popup.php?r_date=09-18-2016&img=09-18-2016page-1-1

“For Big Projects will seek help from NLC and FWO: Chief Minister”

Daily Salam, September 20, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister stated that for big projects to complete we will seek help from NLC and FWO. Up-gradation of Sost dry port, extension of Skardu road, and construction of medical college will be completed with the help from NLC and FWO. He also noted there is need to amend few laws so that projects are completed on time. Criticising former government of PPP, Hafeez noted that the previous government did not pay any heed to reform the system.

<http://www.dailysalam.com/index.php>

“Change cannot come in one year”

Baad-e-Shimal, September 22, 2016

Chief Minister Hafeezur Rehman stated that change in one year is not possible. It will take more than four years to actually see that change has happened. He also stated that it is because we have to compensate the 40 years of plunder done by earlier rulers. He also stated that a chairlift would be built at Rama and a good company would be approached to conduct its feasibility test. Rahman also stated that an Italian donor has shown interest in building a five start hotel at Rama. On CPEC Hafeez stated it is not a cake that everyone would get a pie. It is a mega

project that will go until 2030. He stated GB will get most out of it.

<http://www.dailybaadeshimal.com/?dt=MDktMjItMjAxNg%3D%3D>

“Don't want Kashmir type of setup, want full provincial and constitutional identity: Kacho Imtiyaz”

Daily Salam, September 25, 2016

Kacho Imtiyaz Hiader Khan, a member of Legislative Assembly Gilgit-Baltistan stated that people will not accept Kashmir type of setup. We want complete provincial rights with constitutional identity. People of Gilgit-Baltistan are living on lollypops. Now it is time to get our constitutional right. We are been again given an old wine in new bottle. Our two members in National Assembly and Senate are invited to clap there. They cannot even say a one word there. We want administrative authority, we also want financial authority. We want to become a fifth province so that our desire since last 70 years is fulfilled. We gave many sacrifices for Pakistan and our children are patriotic but unfortunately we have been stitched with Kashmir issue.

<http://www.dailysalam.com/index.php>

“Waging Jihad against Corruption, will not forgive those who interrupt Corridor: Chief Minister”

Baad-e-Shimal, September 26, 2016

Addressing a large gathering of people at Singal, the chief minister stated that it will cost 1.5 billion rupees to construct the road from Ghakwoch to Beyarchi and from Beyarchi to Gilgit. Completion of these roads will bring economic revolution in the region. He also stated that the predecessor government's economic policies were disasters. On the CPEC, he noted that it will change the fortune of Gilgit-Baltistan. At the same time, he also stated those elements that will disrupt CPEC Corridor would be dealt by force.

http://www.dailybaadeshimal.com/popup.php?r_date=09-26-2016&img=09-26-2016page-1-1

“A Major Breakthrough on Constitutional Crisis”

Baad-e-Shimal, September 28, 2016

Deputy Speaker of Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly Jaferul Khan noted that during his interaction with Senate Committee on CPEC and with Sartaj Aziz, he came to know that a major breakthrough has happened on Constitutional crisis

of GB. Jaferul stated that Sartaj Aziz told him that the Constitutional Committee headed by him has completed the report and that it would be handed over to the prime minister within a month.

http://www.dailybaadeshimal.com/popup.php?r_date=09-28-2016&img=09-28-2016page-1-1

Fact sheet on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

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 Muhammad Masood Khan

Prime Minister: Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan

AJK Council: Total 17 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: Nine

Baltistan Region (part of Ladakh) is divided into Ghanche, Skardu, Kharmang and Shigar 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, Khovar, Dom, Gujjar, Rajput and Kashmiri

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

Languages: Shina, Balti, Wakhi, Khovar, 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: Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan

Chief Minister G-B: Hafiz Hafiz-ur-Rehman

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 to 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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