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Compiled & Edited

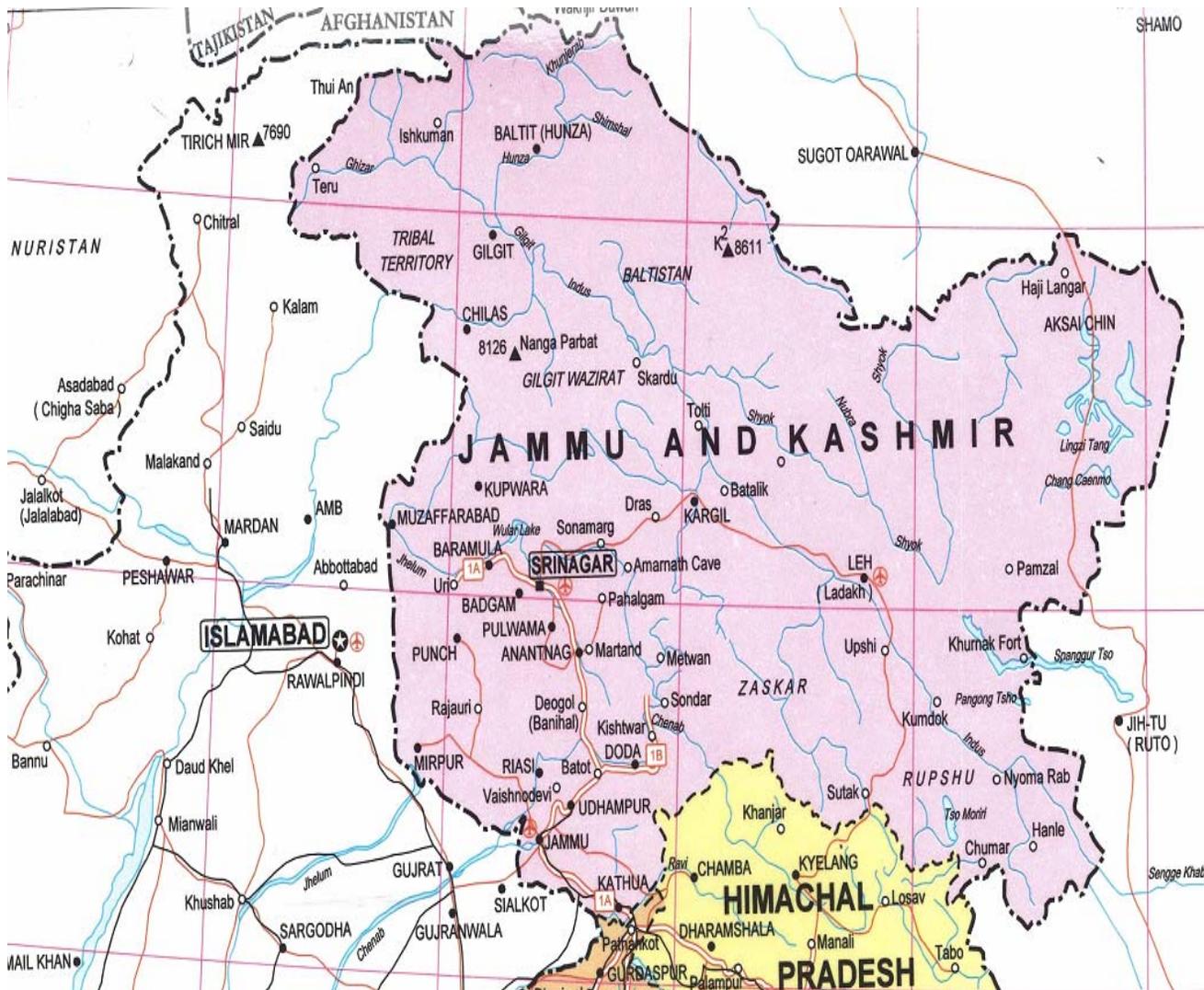
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Jammu & Kashmir

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

About this Issue

The government of Pakistan ceded minor concessions to Northern Areas as part of “The Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order 2009.” As a result, the Northern Areas would now be referred as Gilgit Baltistan, which off course has been a long standing demand of the people of this region. Even though Prime Minister Gilani claimed that the order would vest similar status to the Northern Areas as the other provinces of Pakistan, it is far from ensuring the same. The order has met with mixed reactions with some political parties rejecting it completely while some expressing dissatisfaction on its shortcomings.

There are several reports in the issue which talk about the growing Chinese influence in the PoK at length. China is making its way through investments in building infrastructure- roads, dam etc in this underdeveloped region. In times of economic crisis coupled with the political instability in Pakistan, China is successfully cajoling the establishment by way of heavy investments in the PoK.

Some political groups in PoK have reiterated that India should ascertain that the people of Gilgit Baltistan are also consulted in any understanding which may be arrived on Kashmir in future between India and Pakistan.

Priyanka Singh

Empowerment & Self-governance Package or Governor's Rule in Gilgit-Baltistan

Senge H Sering

The term 'self governance' is coined to defuse pressure from the international organizations, which demand genuine political and judicial rights for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. Pakistan has been illegally ruling these regions through presidential ordinances since last sixty-three years. This package is a prelude to the governor's rule and will only strengthen Pakistani colonialism. Just like the Chairman of the Northern Areas Legislative Assembly, the governor will be an outsider, either from Punjab or NWFP, who will act like the viceroy of Pakistan.¹ These are the words of Manzoor Hussain Parwana, Chairman of the separatist political party called Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement. He was commenting via email on the recently passed presidential ordinance called 'Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order 2009'. The presidential ordinance was approved on Saturday by the federal cabinet, which will replace the existing Northern Areas Governance Order 1994 and Legal Framework Order of 2001.

To some extent, his fears are legitimate. For example, instead of an elected chief minister (of the legislative assembly) who will be a local politician, the non-elected and non-local governor will have the authority to choose and appoint the ministers. The authority of the governor to hire and fire the ministers will only lead to horse-trading and political manipulation. It will make the members of the legislative assembly more loyal to the governor rather than to the chief minister who is supposedly the chief executive. The two-tier system; in which a minister is appointed by the governor, but answerable to the chief minister, will only make the system more ambiguous and inefficient. Likewise, it is not clear whether the Chief Minister will be chosen by the legislative assembly or the Gilgit-Baltistan Council, which will be dominated by Pakistani federal ministers. Further, the law that restricts the number of ministers to six is still to be identified. Pakistan is known worldwide for its extensive fleet of ministers and advisors, both at federal and provincial levels. In a 'province-like' set

up of Gilgit-Baltistan, wouldn't a large number of ministerial entourage be more suitable to the needs of Islamabad to buy loyalties? The annual budget would be presented before the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly but will be approved by the bureaucrats of the KANA Division in Islamabad. The members of the assembly will be visiting the KANA bureaucrats more often than attending the assembly sessions so to ensure funds for their constituency and secure future terms of elections.

Likewise, the federally dominated Gilgit-Baltistan Council will overshadow the locally elected assembly. Consequently, legislative authority of the assembly will always remain under threat. The number of the council members is still not clear, whether it is six or fifteen. But one thing is clear that the prime minister of Pakistan will have the veto power to overrule any bill passed by the legislative assembly; which is a serious violation of the UNCIP resolutions on Gilgit-Baltistan. Pakistani officials claimed that the Northern Areas fall under the direct jurisdiction of the President of Pakistan and, therefore, President Asif Ali Zardari will issue an order after approval of the same by the Federal Cabinet. The validity of statements like these should be challenged since the regions of Gilgit-Baltistan – as per the UNCIP resolutions – do not fall under the authority of any Pakistani representative and therefore neither the president nor the cabinet members have any legal position to make decisions on these regions.

Political leaders from the Indian Kashmir and Muzaffarabad - the capital of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir – have also expressed their disapproval of the ordinance. For instance, members of the Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly have called an urgent All Parties Conference (APC) on September 1, 2009 to demand of Pakistan to reunite Gilgit-Baltistan with AJK, which is currently under Pakistani control. Similarly, the retired Chief Justice of AJK Supreme Court has called the ordinance a ploy to damage the Kashmir cause. The Chairman of the United Jihad Council, Syed Salahuddin has termed the ordinance as another evidence of a weakened Pakistani stand on the Kashmir issue. He thinks, this way, Pakistan is providing a deliberate

excuse to India to convert LoC into an international border and annex Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. Pro-Indian Kashmiri groups have termed the ordinance as yet another violation by Pakistan of the UNCIP resolutions. Kashmiri politicians from AJK are dismayed since they were not consulted during the process; only inputs from the federal ministers of Pakistan were taken. Even the local people of Gilgit-Baltistan were kept in dark till the last moment. Representatives of Pakistan Muslim League-N, an ally of the governing Peoples Party, are also offended for being ignored during the consultative sessions. Pakistan Muslim League (Q) and National Front of Pakistan have opposed the ordinance by calling it an executive order. The Human Rights Advocacy Network has opposed the ordinance since it fails to meet the genuine aspirations and demands of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. Spokesperson of the Balawaristan National Front (BNF) expressed that if Pakistan is claiming to follow the AJK model, then people of Balawaristan should be allowed to elect their own president and the prime minister. He is concerned to see the Pakistani prime minister as the chairman of Gilgit-Baltistan Council. He says that the constitution of Pakistan does not permit any Pakistani to hold such a post. Even the UNCIP resolutions bar Pakistani nationals to interfere in the administrative affairs of Balawaristan.

For those among the natives of Gilgit-Baltistan who call themselves pro-Pakistani, the package is somehow disappointing. Their demand to see Gilgit-Baltistan as the fifth province of Pakistan and getting representation in Pakistani parliament remains unfulfilled. The officials described the decision as “the Northern Areas will have self-rule on the pattern of Azad Kashmir. They will have province-like autonomy but will not be a province constitutionally. Prime Minister Gilani echoed similar opinion by saying that since Gilgit-Baltistan is not a constitutional part of the country and are linked with the Kashmir issue, we can not give them representation in the parliament. Although the Kashmir issue is quoted as the reason by Pakistan for denial of genuine autonomy to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan; it is Pakistan’s own colonial designs to maintain its control on these regions which provide not only a stable link to China but to Central Asian markets and natural resources as well.

India has allocated twenty-four seats in the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly for the representatives of AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan. Balawaristan National Front has demanded India to allow representatives from Gilgit-Baltistan to fill their share of the seats. Some laws related to guaranteeing autonomy existed in Gilgit-Baltistan until the 1970s. Unfortunately, they have been abrogated due to the lack of sincerity on part of Pakistani establishment. Unless the new ordinance for Gilgit-Baltistan proves its worth and fulfill its promises, politicians of Gilgit-Baltistan will continue to feel betrayed yet again.

The Author is Visiting Fellow at IDSA. The authors views are his personal.

Footnotes

- ¹ <http://skardu.blogspot.com/2009/09/gilgit-baltistan-self-governance.html>

Political Developments

“Pro-liberation group of Pakistan administered Kashmir keen to join peace dialogue,”

August 31, 2009

Balawaristan National Front (BNF) chairman, Abdul Hamid Khan has said that India should involve the people of Gilgit Baltistan, Chitral and Shhenaki Kohistan regions in the peace dialogue process of Kashmir. Talking to reporters here on Thursday, Khan said, “A dialogue on Kashmir between India and Pakistan should not ignore the strategic importance of Balwaristan”. “India should not ignore Gilgit Baltistan which combining Chitral comprises an area of 100,000 square kilometres. Whenever there is a dialogue regarding Kashmir, India should include people of Gilgit Baltistan,” he added. He also expressed concern at the recent construction of 16 airstrips along the Karakorum Highway (KKH) that links Pakistan with China. “We want to live as an independent country. Our independent country will be peaceful for Pakistan as well as India and also will be good for China because our area wouldn’t be used for terrorism. Border of India will become safe and it will provide India an approach to Central Asia and China. We want India to request China to stop the process of leasing our hills...lands, construction of airstrips, railway lines which it has started by deploying its forces,” he further stated.

http://sify.com/news/fullstory.php?a=jh5n4fhgcjh&title=Pro_liberation_group_of_Pakistan_administered_Kashmir_keen_to_join_peace_dialogue

“Pak renames the Northern Areas as Gilgit-Baltistan”

ISLAMABAD: In a move with far-reaching implications, the Pakistan government on August 29 approved a self-governance and reforms package for the Northern Areas, renaming it as “Gilgit-Baltistan”, part of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The strategically located Northern Areas, which borders the North West Frontier Province to the west, Afghanistan and China to the north and Jammu and Kashmir to the east, will have rights akin to those of Pakistan’s four provinces, as stated by Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani.

The “Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order 2009”, unveiled by Gilani at a news conference in Islamabad, is also aimed at giving the Northern Areas “full internal autonomy” and changing the region’s name to Gilgit-Baltistan. The order will come into effect after President Asif Ali Zardari formally ratifies it by issuing an official notification.

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/pak-renames-the-northern-areas-as-gilgitbaltistan/100292-2.html>

“Reform package for NAs receives wide applause,”

Hunza Times, August 30, 2009

GILGIT: People across Gilgit-Baltistan including public representatives, ulema, notables, political leaders and intellectuals have widely welcomed the new Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order, 2009. The high-powered Committee under the chairmanship of Minister for Kashmir and Northern Areas (KANA) prepared the reforms package to provide autonomy to the area. Syed Mehdi Shah, President PPP Gilgit Baltistan, Haji Fida Muhammad Nashad, Member NAs Assembly, Raja Jalal Hussain, Chairman, District council Skardu, Ahmad Ali, Chairman, Municipal Committee Skardu said the package would go a long way in development and empowerment of people of the area.

<http://hunzatimes.wordpress.com/2009/08/30/reform-package-for-nas-receives-wide-applause/>

“Gilgit-Baltistan,”

Dawn Editorial, August 31, 2009

The Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order, 2009 approved by the federal cabinet on August 29 has received mixed initial reactions. At least one change has been universally applauded though: renaming the Northern Areas Gilgit-Baltistan has met a long-standing demand of the people of the area who chafed under an appellation that was simply the geographical expression of the area’s position vis-à-vis Jammu and Kashmir, i.e. the ‘northern areas’ of Jammu and Kashmir. But while the federal government and its allies have trumpeted the other changes to the administrative structure of

Gilgit-Baltistan, the people of the area have been less than impressed.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/provinces/16-gilgit-baltistan-hs-02>

“Rescuing the Northern Areas,”

Editorial, Daily Times, August 31, 2009

Some people think that the self-governance reforms package for the Northern Areas announced on August 29 is already too little too late. But given how many things is nowhere near solution in the country, the PPP government has taken the right step. The Northern Areas will be Gilgit-Baltistan from now on, with its own elected Assembly, albeit in parallel to an independent Council working under a centre-appointed governor.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C08%5C31%5Cstory_31-8-2009_pg3_1

“Gilgit-Baltistan govt in 3 months: Farooq,”

The News, August 29, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Parliamentary leader of the MQM Dr Farooq Sattar stated the elections in Gilgit-Baltistan would be held in next three months to install Asad-Kashmir like government there. Addressing a news conference, he further noted that a cabinet committee would be constituted to remove hurdles for merging Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan in accordance with the resolutions of United Nations.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=86015>

“Cabinet approves ‘Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order 2009’,”

Associated Press of Pakistan, August 29, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet on August 29 approved a self governance reforms package for the country’s Northern Areas aimed at giving it full internal autonomy besides changing its nomenclature to Gilgit Baltistan. Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani while addressing a press conference in Islamabad announced the Cabinet’s decision of ‘Gilgit Baltistan

Empowerment and Self Governance Order 2009’ that will replace the earlier ‘Northern Areas’ Legal Framework Order 1994’. The specially convened meeting of the Cabinet unanimously approved the Order’s draft after being discussed with all the stake holders. The Prime Minister said a high powered Committee under the chairmanship of Minister for Kashmir and Northern Areas (KANA) prepared the reforms package to provide autonomy to the area. He mentioned that all major improvements for Northern Areas were made during the period of Pakistan Peoples Party including the first Northern Areas Council Legal Framework Order 1974 75 by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and further democratization through Northern Areas Legal Framework Order 1994 by Benazir Bhutto.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=85033&Itemid=2

“PML-N welcomes approval of Self-Governance for NA: Ahsan”

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) welcomed the approval of Self-Governance for the Northern Areas, saying PML-N would support every step which aimed to bring people of these areas into mainstream. Information Secretary, Ahsan Iqbal stated that Nawaz Sharif has been a great supporter of giving same rights to people of Gilgit-Baltistan region like other areas of the country have. He said that the people of these areas should be given resources to improve infrastructure, social sector and a university should be setup for students to get higher education.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=151049>

“PML-Q rejects new package,”

Daily Times, August 30, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) on August 29 rejected the new package for Northern Areas approved by the federal government. PML-Q’s member in the National Assembly, Marvi Memon, who is in charge of the party’s Gilgit-Baltistan affairs, in a statement noted the Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self Governance) Order 2009, as approved by the cabinet, failed to give provisional provincial status to the region. It was also short of AJK-style self-

governance, the longstanding demand of the people of the Northern Areas, she added.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C08%5C30%5Cstory_30-8-2009_pg1_4

“Gilgit Baltistan to have new governor,”

Hunza Times, August 29, 2009

The Federal Cabinet has unanimously approved the new Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Ordinance 2009 to give full internal and political autonomy to the Northern Areas. Its meeting was held here on Saturday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani. Giving salient features of the Ordinance, the Prime Minister told newsmen that the new name of the Northern Areas shall be Gilgit Baltistan.

He said there will be a Governor for Gilgit Baltistan who will be appointed by the President of Pakistan. He said till the election of the Legislative Assembly, Minister for Kashmir and Northern Areas will be acting as a Governor. There will be a Chief Minister who shall be elected by Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly. He will be assisted by six ministers with provision of two advisors. The Prime Minister said that Legislative Assembly will have twenty four members who will be elected directly. In addition, there will be six women and three technocrat seats.

<http://hunzetimes.wordpress.com/2009/08/29/gilgit-baltistan-to-have-new-governor/>

“Nawaz for parliamentary session on NAs package,”

Daily Times, September 1, 2009

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif said on August 31 he would demand the government to call a National Assembly (NA) session to discuss the New Governance Order for the Northern Areas. The former premier was talking to Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Chairman Yasin Malik, who called on him at his Raiwind residence. Although Malik and a delegation of AJK Legislative Assembly members visited Nawaz separately, their agenda was same, sources stated.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C09%5C01%5Cstory_1-9-2009_pg7_7

Mohammad Yousuf Zond, “People of Mastuj Chitral protest against collapse of bridge, demand merger with Gilgit – Baltistan,”

August 31, 2009

CHITRAL: Irritated people of Mastuj Tehsil at a public meeting in Mastuj on August 30 on Sunday demanded that their area should be merged into the neighboring Gilgit-Baltistan, saying the NWFP government has failed to provide them basic facilities and protect their property and lives. As district administration officials including the DCO Chitral and policemen brought in a truck from the lower part of the district to help the local police meet any eventuality stood by, the speakers gave full vent to their anger on the authorities for their continued apathy towards lingering issues of the area. The largest ever public meeting in the history of the area was held under the chairmanship of Mastuj Tehsil Nazim Shahzada Sikendarul Mulk after the nearby bridge over the Laspur River collapsed for the second time within a month killing three persons.

<http://pamirtimes.net/2009/08/31/people-of-mastuj-chitral-protest-against-collapse-of-bridge-demand-merger-with-gilgit-baltistan/>

“PM Gilani chairs meeting of committee on Northern Areas,”

Pakistan Times

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Committee on Northern Areas Governance Order was held here at the PM House with Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani in chair. The meeting was attended by Minister for Information and Broadcasting and KANA, Qamar Zaman Kaira, Minister for Labour and Manpower, Syed Khursheed Ahmad Shah, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Dr. Babar Awan, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Nawabzada Malik Amad Khan, Minister of State for Law and Justice, Mohammad Afzal Sindhu, Minister of State for Finance and Economic Affairs, Ms Hina Rabbani Khar and Secretaries Interior and KANA.

<http://www.pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=3739>

“Religious Extremism in NWFP, Swat and Chitral: Impact on Gilgit-Baltistan”

August 11, 2009

Below is a Press Release issue by the Gilgit Baltistan United Movement:

Extremism does not belong to any religion, school of thought or special geographical condition. Extremism is the attitude of human being which is certainly developed due to the surrounding atmosphere, injustice and unusual training. The beginning of the existing era of the religious extremism starts with cold war, in which Pakistan has offered its shoulder to get rid off the Soviet Union from Afghanistan. The province of NWFP, Northern Areas and Tribal Areas due to proximity with Afghanistan was used extensively for war purposes. General Zia-ul- Haque provided military training to millions of Muslims around the world in the name of Jihad-e-Afghanistan. These Mujahideen filled with spirit of Jihad, proceeded to conquer Afghanistan and Kashmir. These Mujahideen had been intemperate after the withdrawal of Soviet Union’s army from Afghanistan, scattered around the world and organized in the name of Al Qaeda and Taliban to spread their specific concept of Islamic ideology.

Gilgit Baltistan was victimized by these religious extremists in May 1988 when on the consent of General Zia-ul-Haque and official agencies sent 80 thousand militants /Lashkari to attack Gilgit Baltistan. The Lashkari comprised of tribesmen of NWFP and Afghani natives. The Lashkar reached Gilgit after covering a distance of 600 Kilometers by Karakoram Highway. The genocide of Shias was the main aim of this attack. The Lashkars which were fully armed with heavy weapons committed genocide and terror activities in Gilgit, settlements were ruined, human being, animals and un-harvested crops were burnt and the Shia population of Jalalabad was burnt alive. Hundreds of women were raped, humiliated and kidnapped. No case was registered against these militants nor were they asked the reason of the attack on Gilgit Baltistan. The invasion and killing of humans has been concealed from the world.

<http://www.unpo.org/content/view/9914/83/>

Tom Hussain, “Pakistan’s north seeks equal status,”

The National, August 10, 2009

GILGIT: Representatives of Pakistan’s northernmost districts are calling for constitutional reforms, warning that failure to resolve the region’s uncertain political status is fuelling separatist sentiments. The five mountainous districts of the Northern Areas, sandwiched between Afghanistan, China and India, are distinct from the rest of the country as they are not a party to Pakistan’s constitution because of their historical linkage with Kashmir, disputed by India and Pakistan. Local politicians affiliated to Pakistan’s mainstream parties said the constitutional anomaly had deprived the estimated 1.4 million inhabitants of the region, known historically as Gilgit-Baltistan, of fundamental rights available to citizens of Pakistan’s four provinces and the part of disputed Kashmir that it administers.

<http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090811/FOREIGN/708109912/1103/NEWS>

Usman Manzoor, “Chief Judge Northern Areas refuses to resign,”

The News, August 13, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Where the historic Supreme Court decision sent scores of PCO judges home and gave an intimation to some to be ready for trial in the Supreme Judicial Council, there is at least one PCO judge who, rewarded for siding with the dictator by appointing him as Chief Judge of the Northern Areas Supreme Appellate Court after his retirement, and is still enjoying the powers of that lucrative post. Justice Nawaz Abbasi, who took oath under the PCO in November 2007 and retired in May 2008 was appointed as Chief Judge of the Supreme Appellate Court, Northern Areas, as reward for being with Musharraf in tough times.

One of the senior lawyers of the Northern Areas stated that the chief judge of the Supreme Appellate Court (SAC) was a PCO judge and had been rewarded for being with a dictator while another judge of the SAC who has been appointed by the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) government was the president of the PPP Northern Areas chapter at the time of his

appointment. He noted that in the history of Northern Areas, no judge had ever been removed from his post. However, after the Supreme Court's July 31st decision a ray of hope has lit for the Northern Areas people as well to get rid of the PCO and Jiyala judges. He said that there exists a Supreme Judicial Council in the NAs and if the government was sincere in its bid to establish an independent judiciary, the PCO and jiyala judges of Northern Areas may also be removed.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=192795>

“Panthers Party Demands Immediate Withdrawal of Pakistan Army from Gilgit-Baltist,”

August 24, 2009

Chairman of the National Panthers Party, Prof. Bhim Singh who is also a Member of National Integration Council urged the Government of India for its intervention in Gilgit-Baltistan region of Jammu and Kashmir for the protection of a large human race who are citizens of India by virtue of Accession of Jammu and Kashmir with the Union of India on October 27, 1947. The Panthers Party received a delegation from Gilgit who made a strong appeal to the Government of India and other political parties to extend support to the cause of the liberation of the people of Gilgit from the brutal army rule of 60 years.

<http://newsblaze.com/story/20090824172607zzzz.nb/topstory.html>

Dipanjn Roy Chaudhury, “India concerned over Pak dam project,”

India Today, August 24, 2009

The Pakistan government's approval for the construction of the mega Diemer-Bhasha dam in the Northern Areas, in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), could initiate a fresh row with India. New Delhi says the proposed project would not only be located in an illegally held territory but could also cause floods in Jammu and Kashmir. It is also concerned over reports that the dam may be built with Chinese assistance.

The 4,500-megawatt Diemer-Bhasha dam project was approved by Pakistan's Executive Committee of the National Economic Council on August 20. Construction of the dam on the River Indus, some 400 km from Islamabad, would begin by October

2010 and be completed in eight to 10 years. Its payback period will be 30 years. Islamabad claims the project will be a lifeline for the country.

http://indiatoday.intoday.in/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&issueid=111&id=58158&Itemid=1§ionid=114&secid=0

“Gilgit Leader calls on Panthers Party Chief, Seeks Support for Liberation of Gilgit from Pakistan”

Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan, Chairman of Balawaristan National Front in Gilgit-Baltistan called on Prof. Bhim Singh, Chairman, National Panthers Party and Member, National Integration Council before his departure from India and made a strong appeal for support to the movement to liberate Gilgit-Baltistan including Chitral from the illegal occupation of Pakistan.

Mr. Hamid expressed gratitude to the Panthers Chief for his consistent and continuous support to the people Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. Gilgit region which was occupied by the Pakistani Army in 1948 after the cease-fire was ordered by the UNCIP. Gilgit-Baltistan-Hunza and Skardu have been converted into a colony by Pakistan whereas entire Chitral area which formed part of Gilgit has been annexed as a District of Pakistan with two lacs.

<http://newsblaze.com/story/20090815050915zzzz.nb/topstory.html>

“Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir in the line of fire,”

Kashmir Watch, August 27, 2009

Prime minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Yaqoob Khan faced strong opposition from his cabinet and leaders of the coalition parties over “sell out” of Azad Kashmir Rural Supports Programme (AJKRSP). Khan virtually merged AJKRSP with Pakistan's controversial so called non-profitable NGO National Rural Supports Programme.

The organisation's officials are widely accused of siphoning off earthquake victims' money. AKRSP was merged with NRSP early this month after newly constituted 14 member board of directors selected Shoib Sultan as chairman of AJKRSP.

He also happens to be the chairman of National Rural Supports Programme (NRSP).

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showexclusives.php?subaction=showfull&id=1251385725&archive=&start_from=&ucat=15&var1news=value1news

Hameed Shaheen, “Ruling coalition develops cracks in AJK,”

Pakistan Observer, August 22, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The 4-party ruling coalition in AJK headed on August 20 to a parliamentary crisis following resignation of 12 members belonging to two coalescing parties partners from Muslim Conference Forward Bloc (MC-F) and the Peoples Muslim League (PML) headed respectively by Raja Farooq Haider and Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry. Twelve ministers including speaker assembly, nine from MC-F and three from PML, tendered their resignations to their parliamentary leaders on August 20 en bloc as protest over the allotment of local government and rural development portfolio to AJK PM’s Advisor Ch M Yaseen. The dissidents argue that Ch Yaseen being non-elected should not be given the departmental portfolio. Ch Yaseen belongs to Pakistan People’s Party AJK headed by MLA Ch Abdul Majeed from Mirpur.

<http://pakobserver.net/200908/22/news/topstories16.asp>

Praveen Swami, “Escalation of infiltration across Line of Control worries New Delhi,”

The Hindu, August 20, 2009

Last week, speaking from the ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh pointed to the existence of “credible information of ongoing plans of terrorist groups in Pakistan to carry out fresh attacks.” His warning, classified data exclusively obtained by The Hindu shows, came in the context of a marked escalation of infiltration across the Line of Control: the first reversal of a steady reduction seen since 2005. From a historic low of 126 last year, figures compiled by the Jammu and Kashmir police show that an estimated 236 jihadists crossed the Line of Control from January to July this year. By way of contrast, the estimated infiltration stood at 1,504 in 2002, when Pakistan scaled back support for jihadist

groups in the face of Indian war threats and mounting international pressure. Earlier this year, it was reported that a rally held in Muzaffarabad attracted “thousands of people, including the representatives and leaders of Pakistan’s banned organisations Jaish-e-Muhammad, Harkat-ul- Mujahideen, and Jamaat-ud-Dawa, in addition to the leaders of the Muttahida Jihad Council.”

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article5900.ece>

J Dey, “LeT gets new boss,”

Mid Day, August 27, 2009

MUMBAI: Intelligence reports say Muzamil, who was arrested after 26/11 and released in May, is now in PoK to co-ordinate operations in India. Indian law enforcement agencies have unearthed clinching proof that wanted Lashkar-e-Taiba commander, Muzamil alias Yusuf is now in charge of the banned outfit and coordinating operations across the country. An intelligence report indicates that Muzamil, who was apprehended by Pakistani security forces after 26/11, was released in the second week of May. According to the report, Muzamil has been moved to Muzaffarabad in PoK to handle and co-ordinate LeT operations in India. He is one of the 38 suspects wanted by the Mumbai police for 26/11.

<http://www.mid-day.com/news/2009/aug/270809-Muzamil-26-11-mumbai-terror-attack-Lashkar-e-Taiba-Muzaffarabad-Mumbai-police.htm>

“Sectarian violence from Sindh to Gilgit,”

Editorial, Daily Times, August 19, 2009

Allama Ali Sher Hyderi was the leader of the banned Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. He was killed by a rival criminal clan in Khairpur, Sunday night. Public reaction to his assassination in the country in general and Sindh in particular should worry the PPP and the nationalist parties of Sindh, and those who thought that the Sipah was merely a South Punjabi phenomenon. In faraway Gilgit where a majority Shia population makes the region vulnerable, sectarian clashes occurred in the aftermath of Hyderi’s death, the trouble-makers obviously assuming that the murder was committed by the other side. If the fire spreads, Gilgit will be the one place where most violence can be expected.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C08%5C19%5Cstory_19-8-2009_pg3_1

“Anti-India demonstrations in Muzaffarabad”

Kashmir Media service, August 15, 2009

MUZAFFARABAD: Hurriyat leaders, parties and Kashmiri migrants staged protest and held sit-in in front of the office of the United Nations Military Observers Group in Muzaffarabad. The protestors chanted high-pitched slogans against Indian occupation and human rights violations by Indian troops.

The leader of Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Freedom League, Muhammad Farooq Rehmani, who led the procession, presented a memorandum to the UN officials on this occasion. The officials at the office of the United Nations received the memorandum and promised to dispatch it to their head quarter at New York.

<http://kashmiruprising.blogspot.com/2009/08/anti-india-demonstrations-in.html>

“Grenade attack on Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road,”

August 27, 2009

Militants today made an abortive bid to attack security forces on Srinagar-Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir, road in north kashmir. Official sources stated that militants hurled a hand grenade towards security forces at Dar Mohalla Pattan on the highway. However, it missed the intended target and exploded in a drain without causing any damage.

<http://news.webindia123.com/news/Articles/India/20090827/1328156.html>

“Every child of Gilgit-Baltistan will become a Nationalist- Kaira had a consultative visit to Gilgit-Baltistan”

GILGIT: On the occasion of a consultative visit regarding the newly proposed constitutional Package for Gilgit-Baltistan by Qamar-uz-Zman Kaira, the Chairman met with people belonging to different walks of life. The prominent sections with whom Kaira met were Govt. intelligence agencies, politicians, media and NGOs representatives, bureaucracy, and social workers. On the occasion, Raja Karamat, the candidate for District Council Yaseen, stated that “if

this time as well the Govt. of Pakistan will try to doge with false changes in the political set-up of the Gilgit-Baltistan and power in real term would not be transferred to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, you will see that every child of Gilgit-Baltistan will turn to be a Nationalist for the cause of Gilgit-Baltistan.”

<http://gbpost.wordpress.com/2009/08/12/news-every-child-of-gilgit-baltistan-will-become-a-nationalist-kaira-had-a-consultative-visit-to-gilgit-baltistan/>

“AJK PM vows to complete all projects in two years,”

The Nation, August 12, 2009

LAHORE - Prime Minister Azad Jammu Kashmir Sardar Mohammad Yaqoob Khan has promised to complete all pending tasks within two years. He said the coalition government was a blessing for Kashmiri people. “We will provide all basic facilities by completing all the works left over for decades within two years,” he vowed, while addressing an all parties Kashmir Conference here on August 11. The conference was attended and addressed by leaders of all major Kashmiri political parties, including PPP, Jama’at-e-Islami, Peoples League, Muslim Conference and others.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Lahore/12-Aug-2009/AJK-PM-vows-to-complete-all-projects-in-two-years>

“Govt to give full powers to elected representatives of Gilgit-Baltistan,”

August 11, 2009

GILGIT: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Qamar Zaman Kaira said on August 10 that a reforms package would be announced for the Northern Areas granting full powers to the elected representatives. He said all segments of the society were being consulted in preparation of the reforms package. The information minister who is also the chairman of the region said that the elections for the Northern Areas Legislative Assembly would be held according to schedule on October 12 and 13. The Information Minister on the conclusion of his two-day visit to the Northern Areas stated the package would be announced under an executive order.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=83473&Itemid=2

“Gilgit Baltistan: Response to Pakistan’s Lack of Collaboration”

Chairman of the Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement addressed Pakistan’s lack of collaboration in granting local administration to the area people of the region, after withdrawing its military and civilian personnel in accordance with the resolution of the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan.

Below is an article published by Gilgit Baltistan United Movement

The right of legislation in Gilgit-Baltistan rests with the people of the region. “The government of Pakistan’s proposals to make laws and bring constitutional packages for the region are unlawful and hold no ground at all, as the region does not fall under Pakistan’s constitution of 1973,” said Chairman Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement, Manzoor Hussain Parwana. He spoke at a consultative workshop titled “Gilgit-Baltistan’s constitutional status and the government’s constitutional package” organized by the Human Rights Advocacy Network and Sangi Development Foundation.

<http://www.unpo.org/content/view/9738/256/>

“APHC-AJK delegation meets Sardar Yaqoob at Kashmir House,”

August 6, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The members of APHC-AJK Chapter’s Executive Council, led by the Acting Convenor, Mehmood Ahmad Saghar called on the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan at Kashmir House in Islamabad.

http://peoplesleague.blogspot.com/2009/08/aphc-ajk-delegation-meets-sardar-yaqoob_08.html

Hizbul suspects trained in PoK,

Rahul Tripathi, 8 August 2009

NEW DELHI: Two Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) suspects, arrested from Daryaganj area in New Delhi on August 6, attended terror training camps in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) and regularly met the outfit’s chief Syed Salahuddin. Javed Ahmed Tantray (35) and Ashiq Ali Bhatt (30) told investigators that

Salahuddin met them a few days ago and instructed them to carry out strikes in India ahead of Independence Day.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/city/delhi/Hizbul-suspects-trained-in-PoK/articleshow/4869141.cms>

Steve Herman, “Delhi Police Claim to Thwart another Terror Attack,”

Voice of America, August 7, 2009

NEW DELHI: Police in India’s capital say two men they have arrested appear to have been planning a terror strike within days. Authorities contend the duo received training in militant camps in Pakistan. Police say they recovered a pair of AK-47 rifles, two grenades, ammunition, false passports and other counterfeit identification from two men suspected of belonging to the group Hizbul Mujahideen. The police official says the suspects, Javed Ahmed and Ashiq Ali, were recruited on the Indian side of the border where they lived. Aggarwal added the two men initially were instructed in the jungles of Kashmir, and, in August 2003, crossed the line of control into Pakistan, where they received weapons training in a camp in Muzaffarabad.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-08-07-voa16.cfm>

“PM, AJK visits Lahore on his first ever official visit”

LAHORE: The newly elect PM of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, (AJK), Sardar Yaqoob Khan was expected to visit Lahore on his first visit in the capacity of PM, AJK. On his first ever Lahore visit on 11 Aug as invited by PML (People’s Muslim League) and Kashmir Action Committee, he would address a dinner hosted by his party members. He was also scheduled to meet the CM of Punjab, Mian Shahbaz Sharif on August 12.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=149782>

“AJK Prime Minister meets Rehman Malik,”

Associated Press of Pakistan, August 4, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob called on Federal Minister for Interior A. Rehman Malik here on August 4 and recommended him to open more passport

offices in Azad Kashmir. During the meeting, the Minister stated on the directive of Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, two more passport office will be set up in Azad Kashmir.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=82980&Itemid=2

Pakistan's Empowerment and Self Governance Presidential Ordinance 2009, for Gilgit-Baltistan , Press Release

Manzoor Hussain Parwana, Chairman, Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement

On August 29, 2009, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Yusuf Gilani signed a Presidential Ordinance called "Empowerment and Self-governance Ordinance 2009 for Gilgit-Baltistan". The ordinance will pave way to incept governor's rule through Pakistan's colonial system. This reform package is a hoax and the two million inhabitants of Gilgit-Baltistan condemn it by calling 'The Ordinance for Advancement of Slavery'.

Gilgit Baltistan United Movement as representatives of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan disapproves this ordinance. In order to grant political and judicial rights to locals, we demand that:

After abolishing Gilgit-Baltistan Presidential Ordinance for Empowerment and Self-governance, 2009, an independent and autonomous legislative assembly for Gilgit-Baltistan should be incepted and local authoritative government should be placed as per the UNCIP resolutions, where the people of Gilgit-Baltistan will elect their president and the prime minister

Only defence, foreign affairs and treasury should remain with Pakistan whereas all other administrative affairs should be delegated to the local authoritative government.

In order to ensure autonomy, all Pakistani civil personnel should be withdrawn from Gilgit-Baltistan and replaced with local administration

To ensure peace in Gilgit-Baltistan, the right of speech should be respected. Further, all Pakistani paramilitary personnel including those of frontier constabulary, Chitral scouts, Pak Rangers and Khyber

rifles should be withdrawn from Gilgit-Baltistan. Further illegal involvement of Pakistani agencies in the local affairs should be stopped.

All historical trade and tourist routes between Kargil and Skardo, Chorbat and Nubra, Gultari and Drass, Guraiz and Astore, Ishkomen and Tajikistan should be opened to improve livelihoods of locals as well as allowing divided family members to reunite on humanitarian basis.

Economic Developments

Sajid Chaudhry, “Punjab wants Mangla, Ghazi Barotha royalty,”

Daily Times, August 29, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab government will formally claim royalty on the Mangla Dam and Ghazi Barotha hydropower projects, said Punjab Finance Minister Tanveer Ashraf Kaira on August 28. Addressing reporters, the minister said Punjab was entitled to net hydel profits from Mangla Dam and Ghazi Barotha, under constitutional provisions. “We have told the National Finance Commission that Mangla royalty belongs to Punjab, because the federal government has already turned down a royalty claim by Azad Jammu and Kashmir,” stated the minister.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C08%5C29%5Cstory_29-8-2009_pg7_39

“Prices soar in Gilgit,”

Dawn, August 25, 2009

GILGIT: With the onset of Ramazan, prices of essential commodities have shot up and consumers are facing problems in the region. “It is astonishing that the prices of daily use items rose so high overnight and there is no check on prices by the concerned quarters,” as noted by senior citizen Imdad Hussain. Residents in Gilgit complained that the Utility Store outlets in the region were empty and people could not find the items they require. In the local markets, prices of vegetables have gone beyond the purchasing capacity of common people.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/prices-soar-in-gilgit-689>

“POL product shortage: who’s responsible?”

Editorial, Weekly Baang, August 25-31, 2009

One basic difference between a free nation and a subjugated one is availability of basic items of need. Nowadays, the region of Gilgit-Baltistan is crying for basic needs of life. Though the prices of petroleum

products have gone up phenomenally in other parts of Pakistan as well, with diesel selling at Rs.59 and petrol Rs.62 at per litre, these two commodities have almost disappeared in Gilgit-Baltistan and are not available even at the higher rates. This is the only region which is provided petrol under a specific quota unlike other areas of Pakistan. This unfortunate region is already facing the crises of wheat flour and sugar and the latest shortage of petroleum product has further compounded the situation in the area. At present, the situation in parts of the region, long queues are seen at petrol pumps. According to Arshad Hussain, the chairman of the Gilgit-Baltistan Petrol Diesel Association, 50 per cent less petroleum was being supplied to the region compared to the quota fixed for the region due to which an artificial shortage of the commodity had been created in the region.

http://weeklybaang.blogspot.com/2009/08/weekly-baang-karachi-editorial-page_25.html

Mubarak Zeb Khan, “4,500 MW Bhasha dam cleared by Ecneec,”

Dawn, August 21, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The 4,500-megawatt Diamer-Bhasha dam project and about two dozen other infrastructure and social sector schemes worth Rs977 billion were approved on August 20. The Rs894.25 billion dam project in the Northern Areas, approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec), will have a foreign funding component of Rs312.94 billion. Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin chaired the meeting. The Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Qamar Zaman Kaira, and the Minister for Water and Power, Pervez Ashraf, noted that the construction of the dam on the Indus, some 400kms from Islamabad, would begin by October next year and be completed in eight to 10 years. Its payback period will be 30 years. They termed it a lifeline project for the country.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/12-4500+mw+bhasha+dam+cleared+by+ecneec—bi-10>

“Azad Kashmir can produce 14,000+ MW electricity,”

August 18, 2009

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Sardar Yaqoob Khan said that AJK has hydro power potential of more than 14,000 megawatt (MW). The work on 1,000 MW project has started while another 1,000 MW is expected to start soon. Along with that many small hydro-electric projects have been started by the AJK government from its own resources. The power produced from hydro would be supplied to Pakistan as AJK's requirement is only 400 MW.

Sardar Yaqoob said that Five-year tax-holiday, exemplary law and order situation, business-friendly bureaucracy and easy a market access were the opportunities that AJK was providing to businesses, hence they should avail it.

<http://pkonweb.com/2009/08/18/ajk-has-14000-mw-hydro-power-potential/>

“Industry opposes subsidy on tractor imports,”

The News, August 15, 2009

The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Yaqoob Khan told members of Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry that he is against trade between Azad and Jammu & Kashmir because it might have adverse impact on industries in Pakistan. He said nominal trade between the two Kashmir's has been allowed under internal pressure but the government of AJK is keeping strict vigil that items not allowed in the trade protocol do not enter Azad Kashmir. The AJK PM assured the businessmen that the 1400 MW hydroelectric potential of AJK would be exploited to arrange electricity for Pakistan.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=192947

Rabia Noor, “LoC-trade hits roadblock,”

August 4, 2009

SRINAGAR: The cross-LoC trade hit yet another roadblock today as traders from AJK boycotted the trade. According to the custodian officer for LoC trade at Salamabad, Uri, Muhammad Ashraf Wani, the AJK traders boycotted the trade, citing “hijack of the trade”

by traders of Lahore. As per their statement, the consignments of Lahore traders exceed those of Kashmiris and they also allege that the Lahore goods are sent to the Valley in the name of Kashmir.

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showheadlines.php?subaction=showfull&id=1249471588&archive=&start_from=&ucat=1&var0news=value0news
“AJK WDP approves 11 uplift projects worth Rs731m,” August 5, 2009

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Working Development Party has approved 11 uplifts projects worth Rs731 million. The projects belong to communication, social welfare, education and sports sector. A meeting was held at Kashmir Plan House with Additional Chief Secretary Development Captain (ret'd) Muhammad Yousuf on August 4.

<http://www.tmcnet.com/usubmit/2009/08/05/4310521.htm>

International Developments

B Raman, “China’s growing role in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir”

August 28, 2009

Among the major development projects in Pakistan in which the Chinese have been involved till now are the construction of an international commercial port cum naval base in Gwadar on the Makran coast in Balochistan, the development of the Saindak copper-cum-gold mines in Balochistan, the upgradation of the Karakoram Highway connecting the Xinjiang province of China with Pakistan via the Northern Areas (Gilgit and Baltistan), the construction of a small-scale hydel project in the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas and the development of a mobile telephone network in the North-West Frontier Province.

The Chinese interest in participating in development projects in Pakistan is presently confined to Pakistani Punjab, Sindh and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir including the Northern Areas. In Punjab, they have been participating in projects like the development of a special economic zone, construction of shopping malls etc. In Sindh, talks have been going on for their participation in the development of the Thar coal mines and the construction of thermal and fertilizer plants.

The Karakoram Highway was originally constructed with Chinese assistance with the participation of Chinese engineers. For the last 10 years it has been in a bad state of repairs due to poor maintenance by Pakistani engineers. During the second tenure of Benazir Bhutto as the prime minister (1993 to 1996) she sought Chinese assistance for the repair and upgradation of the highway. The Chinese agreed. The proposal was that the Chinese would upgrade it on their side and the Pakistanis on their side with Chinese technical assistance. The upgradation work has been going on. It has been reported that while the work on the Chinese side has been completed ahead of schedule, it has been much behind schedule on the Pakistani side. It is not known whether Chinese engineers are participating on the Pakistani side and, if so, how many of them.

<http://news.rediff.com/column/2009/aug/28/raman-chinas-growing-role-in-pakistan-occupied-kashmir.htm>

“Pakistan and China sign MoU on 7,000 megawatt Bunji dam,”

Daily Times, August 23, 2009

HANGZHOU: Pakistan and China on August 22 signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the construction of Bunji dam in Astore district of the Northern Areas of Pakistan. The agreement was signed between Pakistan’s Ministry of Water and Power and China’s Three Gorges Project Corporation. Chairman Board of Investment Saleem Mandviwala and Li Yang’an signed the MoU for their respective sides. President Asif Ali Zardari, Pakistan’s Ambassador in China Masood Khan and several senior Chinese officials were present.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C08%5C23%5Cstory_23-8-2009_pg7_1

Tom Hussain, “Silent progress on Silk Route,”

The National, August 7, 2009

GILGIT: Chinese engineers have embarked upon the reconstruction of the Karakoram Highway (KKH), a 1,300-kilometre strategic road that retraces an ancient Silk Route between modern-day Pakistan and China. Reputedly the world’s highest international motorway, the KKH winds its way up the Indus Valley from Hassan Abdal, 48km west of Islamabad, through a kaleidoscope of politically contentious and physically awesome terrain. It took about 25,000 Chinese and 15,000 Pakistanis nearly 12 years to blast and cut their way through the Karakoram mountain range, home to 30 of the world’s 100 highest peaks, and lay the motorway, which is barely wide enough for two-way traffic.

<http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090807/FOREIGN/708069863/1041>

Other Developments

“Govt to promote solar water heaters to cut gas consumption,”

The Nation, August 29, 2009

ISLAMABAD - The government would extend all possible support for production and promotion of solar water heaters in Pakistan as their use would drastically reduce gas consumption in the country, said Raja Pervez Ashraf, Minister for Water and Power and Chairman Alternative Energy.

The Board was informed that AEDB had awarded Letter of Intent to a private company to establish 16-20MW hydel power generation project on River Gilgit near Gilgit city. The company could not proceed with the feasibility study because of certain procedural matters and had sought clarification on it. Moreover, the Board was told that legal aspects of extending the jurisdiction of NEPRA to Northern Areas would also be studied.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Business/29-Aug-2009/Govt-to-promote-solar-water-heaters-to-cut-gas-consumption>

“MINFA developing fruit, vegetable markets in AJK,”

Daily Times, August 28, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture, Nazar Muhammad Gondal, stated that the MINFA was funding Rs 83 million for development of wholesale fruit and vegetable market in Rawlakot. The ministry was also providing technical support and research facilities to scientist of the AJK. The minister expressed these views during a meeting with Prime Minister, AJK, Sardar Yaqub Ali Khan on August 28.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C08%5C28%5Cstory_28-8-2009_pg5_3

“Attock Refinery starts additional oil supply to Northern Areas,”

August 26, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Attock Refinery started providing additional 500 tonnes petrol and diesel on daily basis to overcome the shortage of fuel in northern areas.

(Other Developments continued after Abbreviations)

ABBREVIATIONS

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

The sources of oil and gas ministry stated that additional supply has begun from August 24 and will continue till further orders. The fuel is being provided to Pakistan State Oil. The digging for oil search will reportedly be conducted in Northern Areas and some areas of Kashmir. This will help to remove the shortage of oil.

<http://www.geo.tv/8-26-2009/48238.htm>

“Water filtration plant donated,”

The News, August 16, 2009

MIRPUR: The inauguration of first private-sector water filtration plant in Mirpur on August 14 added more joy to the Independence Day celebrations in Mirpur. It is for the first time in AJK that a water filtration plant has been set up for social welfare. The water filtration plant at the densely populated Sangoat locality at the edge of picturesque Mangla Lake has been set up to provide clean and hygienic water to general public.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=193208>

“Passport office inaugurated in Rawlakot,”

The News, August 13, 2009

MUZZAFARABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Rehman Malik on August 13 inaugurated a passport office in Rawlakot where flight service will also be started soon. Addressing a big rally later, the Minister said that the conspiracy to destabilise the country has been foiled by successfully breaking the networks of terrorists in Swat and Malakand Division and Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=84907>

Tom Hussain, “Dam will silence ‘talking rocks,’”

The National, August 9, 2009

CHILAS: Thousands of relics charting the course of history of Pakistan’s mountainous north to as far back as 9000BC will be lost during the construction of a major dam, archaeologists said. Physical isolation had conserved some 55,000 rock carvings and inscriptions made by invaders, traders, pilgrims and inhabitants, largely between the first century BC and

the 16th century advent of Islam in the area, until the 1960s, when engineers began construction of a road between Pakistan and China. The route of the 1,300-km Karakorum Highway (KKH) traced the route of an ancient Silk Road and, soon after its completion in 1978; German and Pakistani archaeologists launched a survey of the region. Their biggest find was the “talking rocks” which, by coincidence of engineering convenience, literally lined a 70-km stretch of the KKH in the high altitude desert of the upper Indus River valley between Shatial and Chilas, about 475km north of Islamabad.

<http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090810/FOREIGN/708099870/1103/NEWS>

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir-An Overview

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

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

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

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

AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR (AJK)

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

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

Area: 13,297 square km

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

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

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

Capital: Muzaffarabad

President: Raja Zulqarnain Khan

Prime Minister: Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan

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

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

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

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

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

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

NORTHERN AREAS (NAs)

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

Area: 72,496 km

Population: 870,347 (1998 population census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: six

Baltistan Region is divided into Ganche and Skardu districts

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

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

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

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

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

Chairman NALA: Qamar Zaman Kaira

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

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

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

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

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

POK NEWS DIGEST

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