

POK

News Digest

A MONTHLY NEWS DIGEST ON PAKISTAN OCCUPIED KASHMIR

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Jammu & Kashmir

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

In this Edition

The general elections in the so called Azad Jammu and Kashmir ('AJK') are scheduled to be held on July 21, 2016. The current government in the so called 'AJK' led by the PPP (Pakistan Peoples Party) is facing huge anti-incumbency in the region. Besides, there are widespread allegations of corruption and ineptness being levelled against the PPP government in 'AJK' by the opposition parties. Nevertheless, the party is leaving no stone unturned to lead an aggressive campaign in the region hoping to regain some ground it completely lost during the 2013 general elections in Pakistan. Bilawal Bhutto is leading the electoral campaigning in the 'AJK', and in his rallies he is reported to have been taking a tough position against Pakistan Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif. Bhutto has especially targeted Nawaz Sharif for his alleged soft position on India and the bonhomie shared with his Indian counterpart, Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In keeping with the pattern that has been witnessed during preceding elections in both parts of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is almost certain to come to power in the 'AJK'.

As noted in reports included in the current issue, activist Baba Jan's life sentence was upheld by the court in Gilgit Baltistan. Baba Jan has been convicted of flaring unrest in the region during riots that occurred in 2011. While in jail, he also contested for the June 2015 elections in Gilgit Baltistan. The activist who originally belongs to Hunza has been mobilizing people and raising issues concerning deprivation of the people of Gilgit Baltistan vis a vis their fundamental political and constitutional rights. Ironically, Gilgit Baltistan has been reeling under political uncertainty and unrest since the last 7 decades or so. It is neither a part of Pakistan nor an independent state. Pakistan's policy towards the Gilgit Baltistan region has been of neglect and indifference. People like Baba Jan who dare to challenge the writ of Pakistan in Gilgit Baltistan are either imprisoned, forced into exile or eliminated.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

MA Mir, “Mirpur water project: Two AJK officials arrested on corruption charges”

The Express Tribune, June 1, 2016

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Accountability Bureau on May 31 arrested two senior officials on corruption charges. According to a press release issued by the bureau, on May 31, Mirpur water supply and sewage schemes Chief Engineer Shujaat Jaleel and Project Director Aurangzeb were arrested on corruption charges in the Rs7 billion project. The suspects allegedly embezzled millions of rupees and incurred Rs110 million loss to the national exchequer in the form of a claim by the construction company as the head of project management unit (PMU) Aurangzeb forced the firms to stop work on the Rs12 billion project, without citing any reason. Both the officials failed to provide the drawing and layout of the project to the construction company on time. The project that had to complete in December 2015 is still incomplete. It further stated that due to the corruption and unprofessional attitude of the officers, the cost of the project escalated from Rs3 billion to Rs7 billion.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1113927/mirpur-water-project-two-ajk-officials-arrested-corruption-charges/>

“AJK govt registers 80 per cent seminaries”

Daily Times, June 1, 2016

The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government managed to register 80 per cent seminaries in the region as per requirements of National Action Plan (NAP), a senior government official noted in a statement on May 31. While addressing a seminar about the role of religious scholars in link with NAP, secretary Auqaf and religious affairs Syed Nazirul Hassan Gillani stated: “In all 10 districts of Azad Kashmir, more than 45,000 students getting free education in 1,150 seminaries have been registered as per the requirements of NAP,” noted the secretary

Auqaf and religious affairs Syed Nazirul Hassan Gillani. He stated that the rest of 450 religion-educating institutes will also be registered in a few months. He, however, stated a complete mapping of all madrassa's (registered and unregistered) had been done. He also stated the rules for registration had been updated as per the guidelines of NAP and all those seminaries which fulfilled the conditions laid down in Madaris Registration Rules 1991 had been registered.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/01-Jun-16/ajk-govt-registers-80-per-cent-seminaries>

Mian Abrar, “Sharif urged to attract Chinese funding for Diamer-Bhasha Dam”

Pakistan Today, June 2, 2016

Keeping in view the upcoming federal budget for 2016-17, experts urged Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to call on Chinese President Xi Jinping to fund the long-delayed Diamer-Bhasha Dam. Rather than leaving Diamer Bhasha Dam for the year 2037, the experts asked the federal government to attract Chinese investors for the dam as hydropower is the best solution to the country's energy predicament as well as an important part of the energy mix that the government is trying to achieve. These views were expressed at a seminar held under the aegis of the Institute of Policy Studies. The moot was titled “CPEC: The Energy Component”. Speakers also urged the government to review the mix of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) energy portfolio because of the huge proportion of coal-fired projects. They also called on the government to persuade China to include financing of Diamer-Basha and Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline projects under CPEC. Planning Commission of Pakistan Member Energy Syed Akhtar Ali, the main speaker of the roundtable, in his presentation apprised the participants that the 76 per cent share of coal-fired power projects in the mix of CPEC's energy

component comprising 22 projects worth \$33.793 billion was being reduced. He called for removing misconceptions about coal fired power plants being set up under the CPEC and rejected the notion that obsolete technology was being used in them.

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/06/02/news/sharif-urged-to-attract-chinese-funding-for-diamer-bhasha-dam/>

MA Mir, “3 former PPP ministers from AJK join PTI”

The Express Tribune, June 2, 2016

In what is seen as a major blow to the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), its three former ministers and sitting lawmakers of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly on June 1 joined Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Former AJK ministers Abdul Majid Khan, Muhammad Hussain Sargala and Arshad Hussain met with the PTI chief Imran Khan before joining the party. The former ministers will now contest the AJK elections on the PTI tickets. General elections at the semi-autonomous region are scheduled to be held in the second week of July 2016. Both Majid Khan and Sagala were elected on Kashmiri refugees seats while Arshad Hussain, the younger brother of the PTI's AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood, won the elections on the PPP ticket from Mirpur in 2011. Speaking on the occasion, Majid Khan noted the PPP failed to deliver in the AJK during the last five years. The other two former ministers stated they felt proud to be the part of a party which had taken a stand against corruption. On the occasion, Barrister Mahmood, Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar and Jehangir Tareen were also present.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1114859/3-former-ppp-ministers-ajk-join-pti-national/>

“Six archaeological sites' preservation ensured to promote tourism in GB”

Daily Times, June 2, 2016

Ministry of Kashmir Affairs ensured preservation of six archaeological sites in Gilgit Baltistan (GB) to promote tourism and cultural activities. Those six archaeological sites include Manthal Rock Art Skardu, Karga Buddha Site Gilgit, Lamsa Buddha Site Shigar Skardu, Fugush Monastery District

Diamer, Hanzal Stupa Gilgit, and Rock carvings and inscriptions Ganish Hunza. Highlighting the steps taken to promote cultural activities, tourist resorts and sports in Gilgit-Baltistan, official sources stated on June 2 that these are implementation of Annual Calendar of events - 2016 which are designed to promote indigenous culture and arts. These also include events such as Spring Blossom Festival, Silk Route Festival, Ginnani Festival, Babusar Festival, Rama Festival, Jashne Nouroz, Baba Gundi Festival, Thukham Razi Festival and also the holding of Gilgit-Baltistan Festival in Lahore and Faisalabad. The sports activities include improvement and rehabilitation of 33 Polo grounds across GB and construction of multi-purpose sports and recreational complexes in Gilgit, Skardu, Ghizer, Ghanche and Astore districts in addition to approval of GB Sports Act.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/02-Jun-16/six-archeological-sites-preservation-ensured-to-promote-tourism-in-gb>

“CPEC to Bring Economic Revolution in Entire Region: Governor”

Radio Pakistan, June 2, 2016

Governor Gilgit-Baltistan Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan stated that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will bring economic revolution and creates job opportunities in the entire region. Talking to a delegation in Gilgit on June 2, he noted CPEC will not only address energy issue in the country but also develop road infrastructure and information technology system. He also stated being at the gateway, Gilgit-Baltistan will get more benefits from this historic Sino- Pak mega project.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/02-Jun-2016/cpec-to-bring-economic-revolution-in-entire-region-governor>

“First climate change centre at AJK”

Pakistan Observer, June 3, 2016

The first ever climate change center has been established in Azad Jammu and Kashmir for monitoring the climate changes in the area. Addressing a workshop held in Muzaffarabad on June 2, the Additional Chief Secretary

Development Dr. Tashfain Khan noted the center will help for future planning to overcome the challenges of climate change which is posing a serious threat to humanity across the globe. He also stated by the monitoring system of climate change center will help in timely better future planning to meet the challenges of floods, storms and tremors. He stated that natural calamities cause the loss of millions of rupees every year due to destruction of the infrastructure in AJK. The participants of the workshop stated the monitoring system would also help in minimizing the human and property losses caused due to natural calamities including flash floods in the area. They urged adopting climate friendly policies to overcome the future challenge of global warming.

<http://pakobserver.net/2016/06/03/first-climate-change-centre-at-ajk/>

“RS74bn Earmarked for Diamer Bhasha, Dasu Dams”

Business Recorder, June 3, 2016

The government allocated Rs. 74 billion for two mega multiple projects including Diamer Bhasha and Dasu dams in the federal budget for fiscal year 2016-17. Speaking in the National Assembly, Finance Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar stated that a sum of Rs. 32 billion has been allocated for Diamer Basha dam which would not only store 4.7 million acre feet water besides generating 4500MW cheap hydel electricity. Similarly, he noted that an amount of Rs. 42 billion has been earmarked for Dasu dam phase-1 which would generate 2160 MW electricity. The minister also stated that water projects in Balochistan were the second most important focus of water sector investments comprising construction of delay action dams, flood dispersal structures, canals and small storage dams. Main focus would be on the existing projects that could be completed within the next two years, he added. He stated work was in advanced stages on projects such as Kachhi Canal, Naulong Storage dam. An amount of Rs. 300 million has been allocated for further advancing the project involving construction of 100 small dams, he added.

<http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/pakistan/300188-rs74bn-earmarked-for-diamer-bhasha-dasu-dams.html>

“Day-long sit-in against 'ruthless' Hesco drive keeps thoroughfare closed”

Dawn, June 5, 2016

Several hundred protesters led by a former MNA and elected local government representatives held an 18-hour sit-in at the Mirpur Bathoro section of the Sujawal-Hyderabad road on June 4 against what they called a ruthless recovery drive, launched by the Hederabad Electric Supply Company (Hesco) affecting all other power consumers in Thatta and Sujawal districts. Thousands of vehicles remained stuck up on both sides of the thoroughfare for the whole day as the protesters had started the sit-in soon after dawn and continued with it till late in the evening. Former MNA and Pakistan Peoples Party Thatta-Sujawal president Arbab Wazir Ahmed Memon, along with a nominated town committee chairman, Ayaz Memon, and several councillors including Mama Siddiq Soho led the protest. Speaking to the sit-in participants, they strongly criticised Hesco for removing scores of pole-mounted transformers (PMTs) to suspend power supply to a number of localities just to force a handful of defaulters to pay off their dues.

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1262766/day-long-sit-in-against-ruthless-hesco-drive-keeps-thoroughfare-closed>

Zafar Butt, “Narinder Khalisa get rousing welcome in Muzaffarabad”

Kashmir Media Service, June 5, 2016

Hurriyat leader and the Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement, Zafar Akbar Butt and Sikh leader Narinder Singh Khalisa, who are on a visit to Pakistan, were accorded warm welcome on arrival in Muzaffarabad, on June 5. Zafar Akbar Butt on the occasion thanked the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir for their moral support to the Kashmir cause, adding that the people of the base camp had given unprecedented sacrifices for the liberation movement. Narinder Singh Khalisa speaking on the occasion noted that the people of Kashmir would continue their struggle till its logical conclusion.

<http://www.kmsnews.org/news/2016/06/05/zafar-butt-others-warmly-received-in-muzaffarabad.html>

Shabbir Mir, “Over negligence: G-B police chief suspends three KSF officials”

The Express Tribune, June 6, 2016

At least three officials of Karakoram Security force (KSF) were suspended by Gilgit-Baltistan IGP Zafar Iqbal Awan for not performing their duties. The cops were suspended after they failed to chase a Chinese national who illegally purchased arms and attempted to smuggle them to China. “[Awan] has taken the decision to punish [the official],” Mubarak Jan, a spokesperson for the G-B police, noted before media on June 5. The suspended officials included KSF in charge, Inspector Hamid and Sub-Inspector Ejaz. “An enquiry has been initiated against the officials,” he noted. A week earlier, Wang Jianqiu was arrested at Pakistan-China border near Khunjerab Pass for smuggling weapons into China. The smuggled weapons included four 9mm pistols, 200 rounds and a map. Police believe the suspect was planning to use the material to orchestrate a terror bid in China. According to the police, they had never seized such a large quantity of smuggled weapons at Pakistan-China border.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1116917/negligence-g-b-police-chief-suspends-three-ksf-officials/>

MA Mir, “Divided Kashmiri families: APHC seeks free movement across Line of Control”

The Express Tribune, June 6, 2016

Delegates of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), headed by Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) chief Zaffar Akbar Bhat, appealed both Pakistan and India to allow the divided Kashmiri families to cross the Line of Control (LoC) as state subjects. “Kashmir dispute is a humanitarian issue that must be addressed to end the sufferings of the people living across the LoC,” Bhat stated at a reception organised by the people of Muzaffarabad. “The best relief to the divided families is to allow them to cross the LoC as state subjects and both Pakistan and India should accept the papers as 'travel documents' for the people of Jammu and Kashmir who are facing difficulties to reach their relatives across the LoC,” Bhatt added.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1117027/divided-kashmiri->

[families-aphc-seeks-free-movement-across-line-control/](#)

“CEC announces schedule for Azad Kashmir election”

Daily Times, June 6, 2016

Azad Jammu Kashmir Chief Election Commissioner Ghulam Mustafa Mughal on June 6 announced schedule of the general election for the 49-member Legislative Assembly of the state. According to the schedule, polling will take place on July 21 whereas 2,237,058 electorates will exercise their right to franchise. Among total 2,237,058 voters, 1,211,842 male and 1,025,216 female will cast their votes. According to a code of conduct, the candidates will be allowed to hold indoor corner meetings only. The candidates would be required to obtain permission from their respective deputy commissioners for holding public meetings.

Addressing a news conference in the state capital, Justice Mughal noted that the constitutional tenure of the Legislative Assembly expires on July 24, 2016. Under the state's constitution of 1974, it was mandatory to hold elections 60 days before the last date, he stated. The candidates can file their nomination papers by June 16. For 12 constituencies of the Kashmiri refugees, a total of 4,44,634 voters will be entitled to exercise their right to franchise. To a question, he stated that new voter lists have been prepared with the cooperation of NADRA for 2016 election and bogus votes have been removed.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/06-Jun-16/cec-announces-schedule-for-azad-kashmir-election>

“CPEC will not bring any economic prosperity in Gilgit: Local journalist”

Bihar Prabha, June 7, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan has abundant natural resources but these are exploited recklessly in the name of economic prosperity. Even the much celebrated China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has failed to bring any economic development in the region. Pakistan, which suffers huge power crisis, draws its electricity mostly from the Gilgit Baltistan region. Surprisingly, no hydropower project has

been identified in the region for funding under CPEC.

<http://news.biharprabha.com/2016/06/cpec-will-not-bring-any-economic-prosperity-in-gilgit-local-journalist/>

Uday Deshwal, “CPEC and Pakistan: The curious case of Gilgit-Baltistan”

Daily O, June 9, 2016

The status of Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) within the Pakistani constitutional framework has been an issue that has ebbed and flowed over the past 60 years. Previously, sectarian strife and the demographic restructuring of the region were reportedly responsible for the playing up of this issue. However, more recently, with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project finally moving ahead, the issue has reignited owing to the perceived lack of scope and role of the region in the CPEC. In addition, the complex nature of the larger Kashmir issue always looms large. Consequently, the constitutional status of G-B poses a tricky question to the Pakistani government; if left unresolved, it can cause serious trouble to the CPEC project.

Even before the region gained elevated importance because of the CPEC, G-B has been of strategic importance to China because of the issue of the Uighur refugees, its proximity to the Siachen glacier, and the massive hydro-potential of the region. For now, this has turned into a quintessential zero-sum game because if economics are to overcome politics and G-B is to get an elevated status in Pakistan's Constitution, then it will also imply a strategic departure from the country's traditional policy on Kashmir which will have profound ripple effects on the Kashmir dispute on both sides of the LoC.

Additionally, this will result in Islamabad assuredly losing its credibility as a supporter and champion of the Kashmiri cause. On the other hand, the region is also vital to Pakistan for the smooth progress of the economically beneficial CPEC, and also for its hydro-potential. While a definitive solution seems improbable in the foreseeable future, the issue is likely to continue getting attention, more so with the

impending Assembly elections in AJK which are to be held in July 2016.

<http://www.dailyo.in/politics/cpec-kashmir-china-pakistan-ties-gilgit-baltistan-loc-siachen/story/1/11107.html>

“PML-N favourite to win upcoming Azad Kashmir elections”

Daily Pakistan, June 9, 2016

In a contrast with rival PPP and PTI, the ruling PML-N is regaining its ground in the election campaign for 49 AJK Legislative Assembly polls scheduled for July 21. Amid the intense electoral battle, PTI has inflicted a serious blow on PPP by wooing away its three important ministers and other electable members. This has raised the hopes of the PML-N to win the elections with majority seats. “We will win the forthcoming AJK polls and form PML-N government in the Legislative Assembly”, stated Federal Minister for Information Pervaiz Rasheed on June 8. “The PML-N will contest the AJK election independently”, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Special Assistant on Political Affairs Dr. Kirmani told a charged political gathering in Muzaffarabad while kicking off the party's election campaign. The ruling party PML-N has decided to contest the forthcoming elections for 49-seat Legislative Assembly of Azad Jammu Kashmir without any electoral alliance after its failure to win over crucial support of the Muslim Conference. The PML-N's decision follows its efforts to woo former AJK Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, head of the Muslim Conference that enjoys significant public support. The Muslim Conference, has also decided to contest the election without giving up its traditional constituencies and also making efforts to make seat adjustments with political parties other than the PML-N.

<http://en.dailypakistan.com.pk/pakistan/pml-n-favorite-to-win-upcoming-azad-kashmir-elections/>

“Gilgit-Baltistan court upholds life sentence for Baba Jan”

The News, June 10, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan Court has upheld the life sentence of Baba Jan a political activist from the Pakistan's

semi-autonomous north. Baba Jan, a left wing political activist from the Hunza Valley in Gilgit-Baltistan, was convicted by an anti-terrorism court for participating in political riots in 2011 and lost an appeal against his life sentence on June 9. Jan has vocally protested what he and supporters describe as political, constitutional and human rights violations in the area, organising rallies and demonstrations in protest. He contested local elections last year from prison, placing second in the polls. "The decision was aimed at barring Baba Jan from contesting elections but it will have a counter-productive impact," noted political analyst Amir Hussain. "This decision will backfire and trigger extremist views like a nationalistic upsurge," he further stated. A simmering resentment has been building in Gilgit-Baltistan since federal government began mulling upgrading its constitutional status in a bid to provide legal cover to a multi-billion-dollar Chinese investment plan in the area. Human rights organisations have been demanding the release of Baba Jan. An international petition for his release has been signed by leading left wing intellectuals, including Noam Chomsky, Tariq Ali and David Graeber.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/126846-Gilgit-Baltistan-court-upholds-life-sentence-Baba-Jan#>

“CEC demands army, rangers' deployment in Azad Kashmir”

Daily Times, June 10, 2016

Chief Election Commissioner Justice Ghulam Mustafa Mughal directed the chief secretary to take up the matter with the federal government to deploy the Pakistan Army and the paramilitary rangers in Azad Jammu Kashmir for peaceful general election. The army and the paramilitary force will provide security in polling stations of all 41 constituencies during general election 2016 in the state. In a press release, Election Commission spokesperson stated that all necessary measures would be taken including deployment of army and rangers on all polling stations for the peaceful polling process on July 21. Justice Mughal directed the chief secretary in writing to make all administrative arrangements including the deployment of the army and the

rangers at the polling stations during the election, the spokesperson noted.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/10-Jun-16/cec-demands-army-rangers-deployment-in-azad-kashmir>

“PML-N, JKPPP agree to continue electoral alliance”

Pakistan Observer, June 11, 2016

Talks on June 10 between Dr Asif Kirmani, Special Political Assistant to Prime Minister of Pakistan and Sardar Khalid Ibrahim, President JKPP, succeeded in continuing political alliance between their political parties. Kirmani later indicated that his party could also strike understanding with other like-minded parties on seats adjustment formula, but did not elaborate. In a statement Dr Kirmani clarified that his talks with Sardar Khalid Ibrahim were positive. It was decided that this two-party alliance would also continue in the forthcoming AJK general elections. However, other related matters are to be finalized for which a six-member committee from both sides has been constituted. The committee comprises Shah Ghulam Qadir, Dr Najib Naqi and Pir Syed Ali Raza Bukhari from PML-N, and Syed Nishat Kazmi, Justice retired Sardar Nawaz and Zahid Akram advocate from JKPP. The committee would meet soon to settle nitty gritty of the electoral alliance. The Muslim Conference headed by Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan and PTI led by Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry entered into poll agreement.

<http://pakobserver.net/2016/06/11/pml-n-jkppp-agree-to-continue-electoral-alliance/>

“Court upholds sentence of GB political activist”

The Nation, June 11, 2016

A court upheld the life sentence of a political activist from the country's semi-autonomous north, which observers say could see a “nationalist upsurge” in Gilgit Baltistan. Baba Jan, a left wing political activist from the Hunza Valley in Gilgit-Baltistan, was convicted by an anti-terrorism court for participating in political riots in 2011 and lost an appeal against his life sentence on June 10. Jan has vocally protested what he and supporters describe

as political, constitutional and human rights violations in the region, organising rallies and demonstrations in protest. Jan contested local elections last year from prison, placing second in the polls. “The decision was aimed at barring Baba Jan from contesting elections but it will have a counter-productive impact,” stated political analyst Amir Hussain. “This decision will backfire and trigger extremist views like a nationalistic upsurge,” he noted. A simmering resentment has been building in Gilgit-Baltistan since Islamabad began mulling upgrading its constitutional status in a bid to provide legal cover to the multi-billion-dollar Chinese investment plan in the area.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/11-Jun-2016/court-upholds-sentence-of-gb-political-activist>

“Gilgit-Baltistan (Pakistan): Politics dictates justice to keep Baba Jan out of the electoral race”

Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières, June 13, 2016

On June 9, 2016, the Supreme Appellate Court of Gilgit-Baltistan sentenced Baba Jan and 11 other political activists to 40-year prison terms in a case based on trumped up charges of terrorism, rioting and assault. The court was hearing the state's appeal against the GB Chief Court's decision to acquit Baba Jan and others of these charges. The Chief Court had set aside Baba Jan and others' conviction in the matter by an anti-terrorism court in September 2014. Their 'crime' was that they had raised their voices for the thousands of families affected by the massive landslides of 2010. The landslides had caused an artificial lake in the Attabad area of Hunza in 2010, rendering homeless thousands of families. Baba Jan and other activists had mobilised the people of the region, holding scores of demonstrations, to seek fair compensation and social support for these families. At one of these demonstrations, a police contingent had opened indiscriminate fire at the protesters, killing two locals, Sher Afzal and his father. It is important to note that the report of a judicial commission formed to probe the matter and fix responsibility for the killings has yet to be made public. The reluctance of the authorities concerned to release the report

highlights their malafide intentions in the matter. The timing of the June 9 verdict raises suspicions about its fairness and impartiality. Baba Jan was scheduled to contest a by-election for Hunza-6 constituency in the Gilgit-Baltistan legislative assembly on May 28, 2016. Three days ahead of the scheduled election, Baba Jan's campaign team comprising local leadership of the AWP GB had led a massive rally of his supporters including scores of women and youngsters.

<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article38178>

Tariq Naqash, “AJK cabinet meeting summoned”

Dawn, June 13, 2016

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Majeed has summoned a cabinet meeting for June 15 but as yet, no business has been proposed for the forum. “Prime Minister's Office has not sent any business to be discussed by the cabinet, nor does the Services and General Administration Department has anything to place before the meeting,” a source scribe on June 12. However, another source who is acquainted with the PPP government's style, stated the meeting may be used to vent anger on the “elements” ignoring and trespassing the authority of the chief executive. He was referring to the recent Service and General Administration Department (S&GAD) notifications whereby politically appointed heads of civic bodies were removed under directives of the chief election commissioner (CEC). “Surely the prime minister and other influential cabinet members are vexed by these terminations and may bring their anger into the open through the cabinet meeting in the presence of top bureaucracy,” he stated. On June 9, Secretary Election Commission Mian Naeemullah asked the Chief Secretary Sikander Sultan Raja to immediately remove the heads of development authorities, some of whom were allegedly involved in the allotment of plots even after the announcement of the election schedule on June 6.

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1264470/ajk-cabinet-meeting-summoned>

Muhammad Ashraf Mehar, “AJK fires PPP-induced heads of depts.”

The Nation, June 14, 2016

Chief Secretary removed different institutions' heads politically inducted by the PPP government in Azad Jammu & Kashmir with immediate effect. In the light of the orders by the AJK government, Commissioner Mirpur Division Raja Amjad Pervez Ali Khan has been assigned the additional charge of Director General Mirpur Development Authority and Director General Mangla Dam Housing Authority in place of removed DG Ch Javed Iqbal and DG Ch Zulfiqar Azam. The Divisional Commissioner Mirpur assumed the additional charge of both of the offices. Similarly, Commissioners of Muzaffarabad and Poonch divisions assumed the charge of the offices of Director General MDA Muzaffarabad and DG Pearl Development Authority Rawalakot respectively with immediate effect. Likewise, the deputy commissioners of rest of the districts of AJK have assumed the additional charge of the heads of development authorities and civic institutions in their respective district replacing the previously removed politically-inducted heads of the development authorities and the identical civic institutions. The incumbent PPP-led coalition government of AJK inducted its favourites on the basis of political affiliations as heads of the development authorities, civic institutions and the identical autonomous bodies since it came to power in 2011. The Azad Jammu Kashmir Accountability Bureau conducted a raid on the head office of Azad Kashmir Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) and confiscated record for further investigations into massive financial irregularities in the institution, it was officially noted.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Jun-2016/ajk-fires-ppp-induced-heads-of-depts>

Abdul Rasheed Azad, “AJK general elections: PTI, MC make seat adjustments”

Business Recorder, June 14, 2016

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference announced seat

adjustment for upcoming general elections to be held in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K). Addressing a joint press conference on June 13, Chaudhary Sultan Mahmood of PTI and Sardar Atiq Ahmad Khan of MC stated that two parties decided to jointly contest upcoming elections in AJ&K. They announced to launch joint candidates for 17 constituencies of AJ&K and joint candidates for rest of the constituencies were to be announced soon. Senior PTI leaders Jahangir Khan Tareen and Sarwar Khan were also present on the occasion. Tareen stated that under the leadership of Chaudhary Sultan Mahmood, the PTI emerged as one of the strongest political parties in the AJ&K within just one year. He further stated that Chairman PTI repeatedly announced that decisions regarding Kashmir will be made in Kashmir, adding that Sardar Atiq and Sultan Mahmood will be in a better position to highlight the Kashmir issue at international level. Sultan Mahmood stated that Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) had made the region a hub of corruption and PTI after forming the government will eliminate all forms of corruption.

<http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/56441/>

Mukeet Akmal, “'Illegal control' of Gilgit, Baltistan by China echoes in LC”

Greater Kashmir, June 14, 2016

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) legislators on June 13 created ruckus over Council Secretariat deleting a resolution of the BJP law maker, Ramesh Arora, seeking debate in the House on Chinese army presence in Gilgit and Baltistan, and stealing uranium deposits from Ladakh. As soon as the proceedings in the Council began, Arora asked the chairman of Legislative Council, Haji Inayat Ali, why his resolution seeking debate on Chinese army occupation of Baltistan and Gilgit was omitted from business list of the House at the eleventh hour. “I was not going to speak against China but simply wanted to debate as to how China is getting into JK territory in Ladakh and taking away uranium for its nuclear use,” Arora stated. While Arora was speaking, various legislators from both treasury bench and opposition stood up in support of the

resolution. Various BJP lawmakers supported his right to debate. Those supporting him included lawmakers from National Conference and Congress.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/kashmir/story/220324.html>

“PM approves PML-N candidates for AJK polls”

The Nation, June 15, 2016

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in consultation with the party leadership, especially the party's AJK chapter, approved the party's candidates for the upcoming elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. In his message to the candidates for securing party tickets, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif noted that the party would take the agenda of development, prosperity, welfare of public and good governance to Azad Kashmir. He also stated it is priority of the government to transform Azad Kashmir into a tourist hub by bringing improvement in the health and education facilities as well as basic infrastructure. He further noted that this will also give impetus to the Kashmir freedom movement. The prime minister expressed the confidence that the PML-N candidates will win majority seats in the elections and devote all their energies to address the problems people face. Nawaz Sharif stated the popularity of the PML-N in Azad Kashmir could be gauged from the fact that the party received a large number of applications for the award of tickets.

<http://nation.com.pk/islamabad/15-Jun-2016/pm-approves-pml-n-candidates-for-ajk-polls>

“Govt to Pay Attention to Health Sector in Upcoming Budget: CM”

Radio Pakistan, June 15, 2016

Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Hafiz Hafeez-ur-Rehman stated that the provincial government will pay special attention to health sector in the upcoming budget. Presiding over a meeting in Gilgit, he noted the budget for hospitals will be doubled to provide maximum treatment facilities to the patients at their doorsteps. The CM also stated one each CT Scan Machines would be installed in Saif-ur-Rehman Memorial Hospital Gilgit and Ghanche hospital. Trauma Centers will also be set

up in three divisions and medicines in emergency would be provided free of cost. He directed Secretary Health to computerize perchi fee system to make the collections transparent.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/15-Jun-2016/govt-to-pay-attention-to-health-sector-in-upcoming-budget-cm>

“AJK general elections: PML-N, Jamaat announce alliance”

The Express Tribune, June 17, 2016

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) on June 15 entered into electoral alliance to contest Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections scheduled for July 21. The PML-N Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) chief, Farooq Haider, and the JI (AJK) head, Abdur Rasheed Turabi, while addressing a joint press conference at the Central Press Club, stated that in the constituencies of Haider, Shah Ghulam Qadir and Mushtaq Minhas, the JI will not field candidates. The PML-N will give a special seat to Turabi as he had withdrawn in favour of Minhas. Both the parties have decided to keep open four seats from Rawalakot, two from Kotli and one from Mirpur, whereas, the PML-N would not field its candidate against the JI's Noorul Bari in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Valley-VI constituency, where Kashmiri refugees are settled. The two leaders stated that the electoral alliance was the need of the hour to open doors of the region's legislative assembly to reputed and educated people.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1124252/ajk-general-elections-pml-n-jamaat-announce-alliance/>

Parvez Jabri, “CPEC to be Proved Fortune Changer for Gilgit-Baltistan”

Business Recorder, June 17, 2016

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) could not only address Pakistan's energy shortfall but prove to be a fortune changer for the Gilgit-Baltistan region. The CPEC is a collection of projects presently being implemented at a cost of \$46 billion to rapidly expand and upgrade Pakistani infrastructure, as well as deepen and broaden economic links between Pakistan and China. The Corridor passing through Gilgit-Baltistan in the

north to reach the Gwadar port in the south of the country will transform the economy and help bridge Pakistan's power shortfall. In his recent visit to Gilgit-Baltistan, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif laid the foundation stone of a fiber optic project which is part of CPEC.

The project will be completed in two years at the cost of Rs 4.4 billion. It will lay on the 820-kilometer long cable from Rawalpindi to Khunjerab and will provide an alternative telecommunication route between Pakistan and China after completion. As a result, people of GB will be the core beneficiary of this project because the region is still deprived of 3G and 4G and other modern telecommunication facilities. Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Chaudhry Barjees Tahir stated that CPEC would bring prosperity in the country, especially in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). During a meeting with a delegation of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) from GB, the Minister noted, the Corridor would prove a milestone in the history.

The minister stated that this project would also promote the tourism in GB, which would ultimately in the favour of local public. He stated that the Pak-Army troops would be deployed to make Karakorum Highway safe for the travellers.

<http://www.brecorder.com/pakistan/business-a-economy/303748-cpec-to-be-proved-fortune-changer-for-gilgit-baltistan.html>

“PML-N's manifesto is to make Azad Kashmir a paradise on earth: Rashid”

The Nation, June 17, 2016

Information Minister Pervaiz Rashid noted that the PML-N's manifesto is to make Azad Kashmir a paradise on earth. Addressing a function at Dhirkot on June 17, he stated an expressway will be built linking Mirpur and Muzaffarabad. He also stated Muslim Conference and PPP remained in power in AJK, but they have done nothing to improve lives of the people.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Jun-2016/pml-n-s-manifesto-is-to-make-azad-kashmir-a-paradise-on-earth-rashid>

“PM Taking Keen Interest in Socio-Economic Uplift of AJK: Haider”

Radio Pakistan, June 18, 2016

AJK PML-N President Raja Farooq Haider stated that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is taking keen interest in socioeconomic uplift of the state. Addressing a public meeting at Kardala Syedan in Muzaffarabad, he noted that provision of better health and educational facilities to masses is the top priority of PML-N. Raja Farooq Haider stated his party believes in fast track development of Azad Kashmir and keen to develop the state on modern lines.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/18-Jun-2016/pm-taking-keen-interest-in-socio-economic-uplift-of-ajk-haider>

“List of eligible candidates for AJK polls made public”

Daily Times, June 19, 2016

Returning officers of all the 41 electoral constituencies of the 49-seat AJK Legislative Assembly on June 18 made public the list of the eligible candidates after scrutiny of the nomination papers. In Mirpur district, a total of 71 candidates belonging to various political parties and independents in all four electoral constituencies of the district filed their nomination papers with the returning officers concerned to contest the scheduled July 21 elections of AJK assembly. All 18 candidates who had filed their nomination papers in constituency LA-1 (Dadayal-Mirpur) with the Returning officer Additional Session Judge Raja Shamraiz Akher were declared eligible to contest the election. Similarly in electoral constituency LA-2 (Chaksawari- Mirpur), a total of 18 out of 25 candidates were declared eligible by Returning Officer Civil Judge Mirpur Malik Muhammad Ikraam. Likewise, from LA-3 Mirpur city constituency, a total of 11 out of 13 candidates were declared eligible by the returning officer. Among those 13 candidates who filed their nomination papers from electoral constituency LA-3 Mirpur city, the nomination papers of two candidates identified as Aftab Ahmed and Khalid Farooq were rejected citing various reasons.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/19-Jun-16/list-of-eligible->

candidates-for-ajk-polls-made-public

“Electoral Code of Conduct to be Implemented in Azad Kashmir: Sikandar”

Radio Pakistan, June 20, 2016

The AJK Chief Secretary Sikandar Sultan Raja stated that electoral Code of Conduct would be implemented in Azad Kashmir in letter and spirit. He stated that violation of Code of Conduct would be dealt with strict action. AJK Chief Secretary warned government employees that they should not participate in any political gathering. He also barred administration for giving protocol to federal and state ministers during their election campaigns.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/20-Jun-2016/electoral-code-of-conduct-to-be-implemented-in-azad-kashmir-sikandar>

“AJK elections to be held under Army supervision”

Pakistan Observer, June 21, 2016

The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Ch. Abdul Majeed stated on June 20 that scheduled July 21 general elections in Azad Jammu Kashmir will be held under the supervision of army. Addressing news conference at the Prime Minister House in Mirpur, Majeed stated that the forthcoming AJK Legislative Assembly scheduled to be held next are of exceptional importance in the backdrop of the Kashmir freedom struggle. He also stated that these elections should be held in absolutely free, fair and transparent manner. Ch. Majeed categorically declared that Ch. Muhammad Ashraf will be the candidate of the ruling PPP from Mirpur City LA-III constituency whereas Raja Imtiaz will be the candidate of the party from Bhimber City electoral constituency in the elections.

<http://pakobserver.net/2016/06/21/ajk-elections-to-be-held-under-army-supervision/>

Ikram Junaidi, “GB is part of the Kashmir dispute”

Dawn, June 21, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) is also part of the Kashmir dispute and the Government of Pakistan does not have an answer when asked about GB's legal status, stated Awami Workers Party (AWP) president and

Supreme Court advocate Abid Hassan Minto on June 20. Talking to participants of a seminar titled 'Gilgit-Baltistan: Democracy or a Colonial System?' he noted anyone who speaks against the establishment's policy is made to face the consequences. “Just one secretary has the power to run the affairs of Kashmir and GB and now the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is passing through GB. However, controversies are arising which are harming the project,” he stated.

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1266188>

“PML-N Committed to Resolve Problems Being Faced by AJK People: Barjees”

Radio Pakistan, June 21, 2016

Minister for Kashmir Affairs Chaudhry Barjees Tahir stated that PML-N is committed to resolve problems being faced by people of Azad Kashmir. Talking to a delegation in Islamabad on June 21, he noted that the PML-N will change the fate of Kashmiris in meaningful way by initiating development projects in accordance with the vision of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/21-Jun-2016/pml-n-committed-to-resolve-problems-being-faced-by-ajk-people-barjees>

Shabbir Mir, “Development, a casualty?”

The Express Tribune, June 21, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan is one of those unfortunate regions where development schemes have been a casualty between the inept political governments and defiant bureaucracy. The situation got worse after the self-governance order 2009 introduced portfolios of the chief minister and governor, making the region an administrative province. Instead of a fast track progress in the wake of the reforms, the region unfortunately lost whatever progress it achieved during the Pervez Musharraf government. Today, the dilapidated roads alone in the capital city of Gilgit speak volumes about how this region has been handled over the past one decade.

Admittedly, the scenic Gilgit-Baltistan has been a victim of floods, unpredictable rains and landslides over the years, in turn, damaging roads and other infrastructure. Of course natural disasters cannot be

undone, but certainly the damage they inflict can be, if the will to do so prevails. There is no denying the fact Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in its five years of rule set precedents of bad governance.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1126716/development-a-casualty/>

“CPEC route security boosted in G-B”

The Nation, June 22, 2016

Security to protect the China-Pakistan economic Corridor (CPEC) route in Gilgit-Baltistan has been boosted. Faizullah Faraq, Spokesman of Gilgit-Baltistan government, noted on June 21 that 300 police personnel have been deployed to ensure full security to the CPEC route from Diamer to Hunza. “The CPEC force is patrolling round-the-clock in 25 vehicles and working under the supervision of SSPs of each districts,” he added. In March 2015, the Chinese government had donated 25 vehicles to Gilgit-Baltistan government for the protection of CPEC route. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif inaugurated the CPEC patrolling police headquarters during his visit to Gilgit.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/22-Jun-2016/cpec-route-security-boosted-in-g-b>

“Thinly Attended Public Gathering Put Stamp on PPP's Unpopularity in AJK: Kirmani”

Business Recorder, June 22, 2016

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Political Affairs Dr Asif Kirmani on June 21 stated that the thinly-attended public gathering of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had exposed it as unpopular party in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. In a statement, he noted that since people were fed up with AJK government and its bad governance that was why only few people attended the rally. He also stated Bilawal Bhutto Zardari should have taken ground realities into account before holding the public gathering in AJK where people were not happy with unpopular measures of the government. He further stated that public gathering had failed despite spending public resources.

<http://www.brecorder.com/pakistan/general-news/304985-thinly-attended-public-gathering-put-stamp-on-ppps->

[unpopularity-in-ajk-kirmani.html](http://tribune.com.pk/story/1126716/development-a-casualty/)

“CEC upholds decision of Mirpur RO”

Daily Times, June 26, 2016

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice Ghulam Mustafa Mughal on June 25 kept intact the decision of Mirpur Returning Officer Judge Sardar Shah Zaman of constituency LA-4, Khari, accepting the nomination papers of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Ch Rukhsar Ahmed, scheduled on July 21 general elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir from the aforesaid constituency. The CEC dismissed the appeal filed by his rival candidate Ch Arshad Hussain of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) in the scheduled elections in the same constituency, who had challenged the acceptance of the nomination papers of Ch Rukhsar Ahmed on the ground of a previous case in which the Supreme Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir had reportedly disqualified Ch Rukhsar Ahmed citing lack of required minimum qualification of matriculation for contesting the 2011 general elections in AJK.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/26-Jun-16/cec-upholds-decision-of-mirpur-ro>

MA Mir, “AJK elections: Which party is sharing political space with women?”

The Express Tribune, June 27, 2016

In rhetoric, all political parties champion women's empowerment. But this seldom reflects in their actions. Take the example of the upcoming general elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Almost all mainstream parties are in the run. But women, who make up nearly 50% of the state's population, do not figure on the priority list of these parties when it comes to awarding tickets. Among the 223, 5489 registered voters in AJK, 985,400 are women, while 125, 0089 are men. Quite surprisingly, not a single woman is contesting the July 21 polls from the platform of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) because the party has not issued ticket to any woman candidate. The PTI claims to have provided 50% representation to women in federal and provincials legislatures. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), on the other hand, has

fielded two women candidates, Farzana Yaqoob and Shamshad Aziz, to contest from Rawalakot division. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz PML-N has awarded ticket to only one woman, Noreen Arif, to run from Patika, Muzaffarabad. Traditional parties of AJK are also breaking social taboos. Mehrunnisa of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (AJKMC) will be trying her luck in politics for a Kashmiri refugees' seat in Rawalpindi, while the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Party (JKPP) has also issued a ticket to a woman, Nabeela Irshad, for the first time to run for a seat in the Palandri area of Rawalakot.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1130840/ajk-elections-party-sharing-political-space-women/>

“AJK PM ousts two ministers from cabinet”

Business Recorder, June 27, 2016

The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Abdul Majeed on June 26 while exercising his powers under Interim Constitutional Act-1974 of Article 14 Sub Section (3) ousted two cabinet ministers. The ousted ministers were Minister for Revenue and Custodian Chaudhry Ali Shan Soni and Minister for AKLAS and Fisheries Raja Wajid-ur- Rehman. Before dismissal of these ministers, PM Abdul Majeed also removed five members of his cabinet including Minister for Rehabilitation Abdul Majid Khan, Minister for Mangla Dam Affairs Muhammad Hussain Sargala, Minister for Industries Akbar Ibrahim, Minister for Transport Tahir Khokhar and Minister for Sports Muhammad Saleem Bhut on grounds of party discipline violation. So for seven ministers have been ousted from the Majeed cabinet.

<http://www.brecorder.com/top-stories/0/60580/>

“PPP KP leaders discuss AJK election with Bilawal”

Business Recorder, June 27, 2016

Members of the Peshawar Co-ordination Committee for Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) election called on Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on June 24 and discussed party's strategy for mobilisation during the forthcoming AJK elections on seats reserved for the Valley. The meeting held in Zardari House

Islamabad was attended by the members of the Committee including Shuja Khan, Senator Rubina Khalid, Nighat Aurakzai, Zulfiqar Afghani and former provincial Minister Zahir Shah. PPP candidate for the lone seat reserved for the Valley for KPK Abdul Rehman Sulehria attended the meeting while Faryal Talpur, Faisla Karim Kundi, Nur Alam Khan and Political Secretary Jamil Soomro were also present on the occasion. During the meeting, PPP KP leaders discussed strategy for the forthcoming election on reserved seats of AJK with party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

<http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/60696/>

“Austerity Measures Adopted in New Fiscal Year Budget: CM”

Radio Pakistan, June 28, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Hafeez-ur-Rehman stated that austerity measures have been adopted in the new fiscal year Budget to make it people friendly. Addressing to the 2nd day proceedings of Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly Budget session in Gilgit on June 28, he noted twelve point thirty-eight billion rupees allocated for development budget will bring a positive economic change in the area. He stated Gilgit-Baltistan Government has utilized its 80 percent budget of previous fiscal year which is a record. Responding to their suggestions, Senior Minister Muhammad Akbar explained Government view point and assured to honour member's positive suggestions. He further announced 15 million rupees grant for DHQ Hospital Ghanche.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/28-Jun-2016/austerity-measures-adopted-in-new-fiscal-year-budget-cm>

“AJK govt focusing on uplift of education, health sectors: AJK PM”

Pakistan Today, June 28, 2016

Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Abdul Majeed on June 28 stated that his government is focusing on the uplift of education and health sectors. While addressing a public meeting at Chakswari near Mirpur, the AJK premier claimed that his government remained successful during its present tenure as it delivered practically.

He also stated that the government not only focused to raise the literacy rate in the state besides encouraging the higher professional and general education, but also focused to provide Medicare to ailing people close to their doorstep.

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/06/28/city/islamabad/ajk-govt-focusing-on-uplift-of-education-health-sectors-ajk-pm/>

Manoj Gupta, “Shackled Reality: Pakistan's Doublespeak on PoK Exposed”

News18, June 28, 2016

It is a clear evidence of Pakistan's doublespeak on "freedom" for Kashmir. A nominee for elections in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) has been disqualified because he refused to swear loyalty to Pakistan, documents accessed by CNN-News18 on June 28 showed. Aftab Ahmed's nomination was rejected by the Returning Officer of a constituency in PoK after he wrote that he believes in independence for Kashmir and not in the sovereignty of Pakistan. The order issued by Muhammad Sajjad, the returning officer from Mirpur, clearly confirmed this. Why Aftab was disqualified. Sajjad noted that Aftab had struck out three mandatory requirements in his nomination papers filed under the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Elections Ordinance 1970. Power in PoK is exercised through Pak Army Headquarters, Rawalpindi & Corps Command, Murree.

<http://www.news18.com/news/india/shackled-reality-pakistans-doublespeak-on-pok-exposed-1263427.html>

“Gunned down: Two killed in firing in Ghizer Valley”

The Express Tribune, June 28, 2016

At least two people were killed and three injured in firing in the remote valley of Ghizer in Gilgit-Baltistan on June 28. Locals stated the incident took place at Buthraiz Nullah of Gupis valley, about 150 kilometres from Gilgit. The attack came days after a warning from intelligence agencies of a possible attack in the valley. “Two men died in the firing, while three others are injured,” noted a police official in Gahkuch, Ghizer. “We have started an

investigation into the incident and will soon arrest the killers.” Meanwhile, officials stated the attackers have been identified. They added the gunmen hailed from Tangir valley, while one was a local. They also stated there was a dispute between these men over the sale and purchase of guns, adding the fight escalated on June 28 and resulted in casualties. Police also stated that tribespeople from Darel and Tangir cross into Ghizer from their valleys and get involved in crimes and terrorist activities.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1132161/gunned-two-killed-firing-ghizer-valley/>

“PAT-AJK joins PTI-MC coalition”

Business Recorder, June 30, 2016

Pakistan Awami Tehreek Azad Kashmir on June 29 announced to join the coalition of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and Muslim Conference. They speakers in their address announced to help the joint candidates. For the settlement of other issues in this regard, a four-member committee was established. This was stated by AJK former prime minister and current President PTI AJK Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry at a joint press conference along with Pakistan Awami Tehreek President AJK Sardar Mansoor in Islamabad on June 29. On this occasion, PTI AJK Secretary Information Sardar Imtiaz Khan, Iftikhar Farooqi, Hameed Pothi and others were also present. While addressing to the participants, Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry stated that all parties; groups need to work on individual basis for the sake of betterment of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. They should help eradicating corruption from its roots. He further stated they are committed to make AJK economically independent and exploiting all available resources of AJK, they would make AJK self-sufficient. He also stated that amendments would be made in AJK 1974 Act to bring balance between powers of the federation and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

<http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/61760/>

“Assembly: 1292 Families Migrated to PaK since 1990, reveals Government”

Kashmir Life, June 30, 2016

Jammu and Kashmir Government, for the first time, revealed that a total of 1292 families migrated to Pakistan administered Kashmir since early 1990s. In a written response to MLA Langate, Engineer Rasheed, the Home Department stated that though there was no proposal with Revenue Department to get these families back, however, there is a policy for return of militants who have shunned armed path. The details suggest that Kupwara tops the list wherefrom families have crossed the LoC. 534 families have crossed over to other Kashmir from the North Kashmir district, while 255 such families belong to Baramulla. 376 families belong to Poonch who have crossed to PaK while one each family from Srinagar, Shopian and Budgam left Kashmir in 1990s. More so, 99 from Bandipora; 11 from Pulwama; 03 from Ganderbal; 02 from Islamabad and 09 from Rajouri have crossed to “Azad” Kashmir since 1990s. The reply stated that Government vide order number: Home-1376 (ISA)

of 2010 dated 23:11:2010 notified policy and Procedure for 'Return and Rehabilitation of Militants', aims at return of “misguided youth” to their respective homes who have crossed over to PaK for arms training between 01/01/1989 and 31/12/2009. The government has notified four routes for their return viz Wagah/Attari border, Salamabad/Chakkan-dabagh, JCP and IGI Airport New Delhi. However, the reply added that such youth have been returning home via Nepal which is not an authorized route.

<http://www.kashmirilife.net/assembly-1292-families-migrated-to-pak-since-1990-reveals-government-109836/>

Economic Developments

“Govt allocates Rs 25.75bn for AJK, GB uplift”

Daily Times, June 4, 2016

The government allocated an amount of Rs 25.75 billion for various new and on-going schemes of Kashmir affairs and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) Division under Public Sector Development Programm (PSDP) for the fiscal year 2016-17. According to budget documents released on June 3, the federal government allocated a sum of Rs 12 billion for Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) block allocation, Rs 400 million for 48 MW Jagran Hydro Power project in AJK, Rs 200 million for Athmuqam-Keran Bypass Road, Rs 700 million for construction of Rathoua Haryam Bridge across reservoir channel on Mirpur Islambargh Road, Rs 200 million for a medical college in Mirpur, Rs 200 million for Mir Waiz Muhammad Farooq Shaheed Medical College, Rs 300 million for Nausri-Laswa Bypass, Rs 400 million for water supply and sewerage scheme Mirpur City and hamlets, and Rs 50 million for water supply scheme Chakswari Phase-II, Mirpur.

The government allocated an amount of Rs 250 million for the AJK Legislative Assembly Complex. Similarly, the government allocated a sum of Rs 11.05 billion for various new and ongoing schemes of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) for the fiscal year 2016-17. According to the PSDP, the government allocated Rs 9 billion for the Gilgit Baltistan block allocation, Rs 700 million for the construction of 16MW hydel power project Naltar-III and Rs 500 million for the 34.5MW Harpo Hydro power project. The government also allocated an amount of Rs 50 million for Attabad Lake resort, Rs 500 million for 20MW hydro power project, Hanzil, Rs 200 million for a medical college in Gilgit, Rs 50 million for a technical college and an amount of Rs 50 million for the upgradation of road from RCC Bridge Konodas to Naltar Airforce Base.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/04-Jun-16/govt-allocates->

[rs-2575bn-for-ajk-gb-uplift](http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/04-Jun-16/govt-allocates-)

Sardar Sikander, “AJK development budget up by 11%”

The Express Tribune, June 5, 2016

In what appears to be a move to influence the upcoming general elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the federal government announced an 11 per cent increase in the region's development budget for the upcoming fiscal year. For AJK's development, the government has allocated Rs11 billion as compared to the Rs9.9 billion of the previous year. Interestingly, of the outgoing year's development budget, a total of Rs8.4 billion was spent while Rs1.5 billion remained unused. Separately, the government has allocated Rs185 million for the Refugees Management Cell (RMC) that deals with refugees from the Indian-administered Kashmir living in Pakistan, and works under the administrative ambit of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan. The 48-seat AJK Legislative Assembly comprises 12 seats for Pakistan-based Kashmiri refugees, who elect their respective representatives on these seats in each general election. The AJK Election Commission's focal person for media Tariq Mahmood Butt noted that the number of Pakistan-based Kashmiri refugees who will vote in the upcoming AJK general elections is estimated to be between 450,000 and 500,000 voters.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1116543/ajk-development-budget-11/>

“Rs12b allocated for development projects in AJK”

The Nation, June 12, 2016

The Federal Government allocated an amount twelve billion rupees for various new and ongoing development schemes of Azad Jammu Kashmir for the fiscal year 2016-17. According to the official

sources, four hundred million rupees have been allocated for 48 MW Jagran Hydro Power Project while two hundred million rupees have been earmarked for Athmuqam-Keran Bypass road and three hundred million rupees for Nausri-Laswa Bypass in Neelum Valley of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Four hundred million rupees have been allocated for the Medical colleges of Mirpur and Muzaffarabad. The Federal government will also provide an amount of two hundred fifty million rupees for the construction of AJK Legislative Assembly Complex in Muzaffarabad

<http://nation.com.pk/national/12-Jun-2016/rs12b-allocated-for-development-projects-in-ajk>

“Food processing plant to be set up near Gilgit: Khurram Dastgir”

Pakistan Today, June 23, 2016

Federal Minister for Commerce Engr Khurram Dastgir Khan stated on June 22 that a food processing plant will be set up near Gilgit to enhance export of fruits being produced in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). “The required land will be purchased from the locals to set up the plant,” he noted while talking to journalists. According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), over 100,000 metric tonnes of fresh apricots, 4,000 tonnes of cherries and 20,000 tonnes of apples are being produced in Gilgit-Baltistan annually. The minister noted that a free trade zone will also be established in Gilgit-Baltistan to boost trade and business opportunities besides creating jobs for locals.

He further stated the shifting of dry port from Sust to Havailian will further benefit the people of the area. Commenting on the importance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), he stated, the Corridor passing through Gilgit-Baltistan in the North to reach the Gwadar port in the south of the country will bring prosperity in the country, especially in Gilgit-Baltistan. The corridor will prove a milestone in the history, he stated, adding, this framework will also promote tourism in GB, which will ultimately provide benefits to the local public. It may be mentioned that the CPEC will boost tourism of 73,000 sq. kilometres region, which is called a paradise for mountaineers and is

home to five of the eight peaks above 8,000 meters as well as more than 50 mountains over 7,000 meters besides being home to the world's second highest peak K-2 and the Nanga Parbat.

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/06/23/business/food-processing-plant-to-be-set-up-near-gilgit-khurram-dastgir/>

“Wapda raises Rs100bln through sukuk for Neelum-Jhelum hydropower project”

The News, June 23, 2016

The state-owned Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) on June 22 raised Rs100 billion from an Islamic bond for the development of 969-megawatt Neelum Jhelum hydropower project, marking the biggest Shariah-compliant corporate financing in the country's history. A consortium of 16 banks, led by the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), agreed to fund the infrastructure corporate sukuk, based on diminishing Musharaka. The privately-placed sukuk with 10-year tenor was mandated in February 2016. Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Company Pvt Limited (NJHPC) entered into a financing agreement with the banks. Chairman Zafar Mehmood at the Wapda, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Syed Iqbal Ashraf at NBP, Member Finance Anwarul Haq at Wapda and CEO Lt. Gen. (Retd) Muhammad Zubair at NJHPC witnessed the signing ceremony. A document from the lead arranger showed that the project set a profit rate for its sukuk of 113 basis points over the 6-month Karachi Interbank Offered Rate.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/129872-Wapda-raises-Rs100bln-through-sukuk-for-Neelum-Jhelum-hydropower-project>

“Rs 37B Gilgit-Baltistan Budget Presented”

The Nation, June 12, 2016

Gilgit-Baltistan budget for the next fiscal year with a total outlay of thirty-seven billion rupees was presented at the Legislative Assembly on June 24. Presenting the budget, Senior Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Muhammad Akbar Taban noted that over 25 billion rupees have been allocated for non-

development expenditures while over 12 billion rupees have been earmarked for development projects. He also stated that top priority has been given to energy sector by allocating 2.95 billion rupees which is 30 percent of the overall budget.

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/24-Jun-2016/gilgit-baltistan-budget-for-fy2016-17-to-be-presented-today>

MA Mir, “AJK unveils Rs73.5b revenue-oriented, tax-free budget”

The Express Tribune, June 25, 2016

Azad Jammu and Kashmir on June 24 unveiled a revenue-oriented, tax-free budget with a total outlay of Rs73.5 billion for the fiscal year 2016-17. Finance Minister Chaudhry Latif Akbar presented the budget in the Legislative Assembly. The government earmarked Rs12 billion for development while Rs61.5 billion would cover non-development expenditure. The finance minister stated the main chunk Rs4,499 million of the development budget will be spent on the communications and works department, Rs1,240 million would go to the electricity department, local

government and rural development (Rs650 million) and education will get Rs1,270 million. The agriculture sector will receive Rs357 million, civil defence (Rs50 million), five authorities Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Mirpur, Kotli and Rawalakot will get Rs650 million from the development budget. The health sector will get Rs410 million and tourism (Rs160 million). The Environment Department would get Rs50 million, forestry and fisheries (Rs425 million), industries and minerals (Rs249 million), transport (Rs20 million), information and media development (Rs140 million), rehabilitation and resettlement (Rs60 million) and physical planning and housing (Rs930 million), social welfare and women development (Rs80 million).

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1129763/ajk-unveils-rs73-5b-revenue-oriented-tax-free-budget/>

International Developments

“Kashmiri activist Qureshi objects to Chinese presence in Gilgit Baltistan”

Business Standard, June 18, 2016

Strongly objecting to the Chinese presence in Gilgit Baltistan, prominent Kashmiri writer and international human rights activist Junaid Qureshi demanded the release of Baba Jan. Speaking at an event on 'China in Gilgit Baltistan; Its Implications', organized during the 32nd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on June 19, Qureshi noted that Pakistan keeps unleashing terror in the region. "China's presence in Gilgit Baltistan stirred up more than China and Pakistan would want the world to believe. Human rights violations are the order of the day in the region while the State of Pakistan keeps operating and unleashing terror with total impunity. The Anti - Terrorism Act is being used to silence voices of justified dissent," he stated. Qureshi strongly condemned the arrest, inhuman torture and 40 years imprisonment of Baba Jan and his associates on fabricated charges of terrorism. "Baba Jan is being prosecuted as he organized protests against the selling-off of all the natural resources of the region to Chinese companies and challenged the forcible occupation of 2,800 square miles of the region's land mass by the Chinese, as well as the annexation of Kohistan and Chitral into the Republic of Pakistan," he added. Qureshi stated the conviction of Baba Jan and his associates is illegitimate as they have been falsely implicated and Islamabad has no jurisdiction in Gilgit Baltistan according to Pakistan's own Constitution and the Supreme Court. Describing Baba Jan's prosecution as 'State terrorism and a grave violation of Human Rights', Qureshi stated the Anti-Terrorism Act is being used to silence the voices of justified dissent in Gilgit Baltistan in order to pacify concerns raised by Beijing.

<http://www.business-standard.com/article/news->

[ani/kashmiri-activist-qureshi-objects-to-chinese-presence-in-gilgit-baltistan-116061800506_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/kashmiri-activist-qureshi-objects-to-chinese-presence-in-gilgit-baltistan-116061800506_1.html)

“Conference on Human Rights in Gilgit Baltistan at the United Nations”

PR News Wire, June 20, 2016

The "Friends of Gilgit Baltistan" (FOGB) hosted an International Conference on Human Rights in Gilgit Baltistan, at the UN Human Rights Council on June 17, 2016. The prominent speakers on this occasion were Alberto Cirio, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and Vice Chairman of Friends of Gilgit Baltistan, Paulo Casaca, Executive Director, South Asia Democratic Forum (SADF) and Junaid Qureshi, Senior Leader of the Jammu Kashmir Democratic Liberation Party (JKDLP) and an expert on the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). In his remarks, Mr. Casaca noted that while Pakistan and China were today cooperating and jointly constructing the CPEC, they need to remember that Gilgit Baltistan is legally and as per UN Resolutions, still a disputed territory and not a part of Pakistan, though annexed and controlled by it. Highlighting the manner in which the Pakistani Army is managing all aspects of this corridor, he noted that this was on account of opposition by the local population over its construction. He also drew attention to the manner in which all signs of local dissent were being brutally suppressed, including through extra-judicial executions.

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/conference-on-human-rights-in-gilgit-baltistan-at-the-united-nations-583634441.html>

“China gifts 25 vehicles to AJK Police”

The Nation, June 16, 2016

A fleet of 25 double-cabin luxury vehicles was gifted to the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Police as a goodwill gesture by the Chinese government. According to official sources, the

modern double-cabin vehicles furnished with latest equipment were handed over to the AJK Police at a ceremony. Five of the vehicles were handed over to the Mirpur District Police. The high-speed Chinese vehicles, added to the fleet of AJK police, would not only enhance the police performance but also help

to perform its professional duty in a more effective manner, meeting the needs of modern age.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/16-Jun-2016/china-gifts-25-vehicles-to-ajk-police>

Other Developments

“Gemstone: a hidden treasure Pakistan needs to tap”

Daily Times, June 27, 2016

The northern and north-western parts of the country are shrouded by three world-famous mountain ranges called Hindukush, Himalaya, and Karakorum, from where nearly all the minerals, which Pakistan is currently offering to the world market, have been found so far. Although the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources was consistently offering investment opportunities in the mineral sector, it could not make significant progress due to one reason or the other. Official sources noted that out of 25 precious, semi-precious stones and mineral specimens, seven were intermittently exploited and marketed all over the world. "These are emerald of Swat, rubies of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Hunza-Ishkoman, Gilgit, pink topaz of Mardan, aquamarine and

tourmaline of Gilgit and Chitral, peridot of Kohistan and Pargasite of Hunza," they stated, adding that all these gems have attractive colours, excellent crystal clarity and a range of size as well as weight, meeting any international standard. Inviting investors, they stated tremendous potential existed for investment in the subject of scientific mining, cutting and polishing for value addition of gemstone from the known localities and exploration for further findings. Found abundant in Kashmir, Hunza and Gilgit, official sources stated that potential resources of ruby were estimated at about 24.9 million grams in these areas.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/business/27-Jun-16/gemstone-a-hidden-treasure-pakistan-needs-to-tap>

Extracts From The Urdu Media

“Chinese Bank Has Shown Interest in GB”

Daily Baad-e-Shimal, June 1, 2016

The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China has shown interest in investing in Gilgit-Baltistan. Recently a Chinese delegation visited Gilgit-Baltistan. They met Chief Minister Hafizur Rehman and other officials. Chinese officials and Chief Minister had a long discussion of possible investment in Gilgit-Baltistan. Assistant Manager of China's Industrial and Commercial Bank Wyang Ve Mang and Senior Relationship Manager Sayed Fawad Tayib agreed to invest in energy and industrial sector of Gilgit-Baltistan.

www.dailybaadeshimal.com/popup.php?r_date=06-01-2016&img=06-01-2016page-1-1

“Chief Minister Failed to Defend Projects”

Daily Bang-e-Sahar, June 1, 2016

When a province has no right to collect revenue then how can it get loan from banks? How can one expect new and mega projects from those who cannot even spend their budget? The Chief Minister and his ministers cannot construct 4MW projects. They are aspiring of mega projects for the province and they expect to get help from the federal government in this regard. While aspiring of mega projects, the Chief Minister should have the confidence of completing the projects on time.

He should have the courage of asking his leaders to deliver. Once unfinished projects are completed, he can ask centre for mega projects. He should also have the courage of making Daryal Nagar a new district. According to the opposition leader, Haji Shah Baigh, the government is incompetent and corrupt. They cannot complete the projects and now they are making excuses that banks are not giving loans. In other provinces, leaders are striving hard to complete projects. But our chief minister has broken all records of incompetency. He could not defend

the projects.

http://www.dailybangesahar.com/popup.php?r_date=06-01-2016&img=06-01-2016page-1-1

“The Threat to Peace”

Daily Bang-e-Sahar, June 11, 2016

Although there has been relative peace in the region, sometimes untoward incident creates an atmosphere of threat. Recently a huge cache of arms were recovered from a passenger bus at Thor. The Police apprehended the driver and started to investigate. But it should be also be investigated that where were these arms going? Fact is that anti-state actors are still present in Gilgit-Baltistan. Although there is no doubt that they are being used by outsiders. Their main target is CPEC. India and other countries who do not want CPEC successful have made an alliance against CPEC. They want to sabotage CPEC. They can use the land of Gilgit-Baltistan to target the upcoming corridor. Although people of Gilgit-Baltistan have reservations vis-à-vis CPEC, they would never want a proxy war being fought on their soil. However, except Gilgit, other districts are peaceful and calm. Last year, more than 5 lakh tourists visited Gilgit-Baltistan.

http://www.dailybangesahar.com/popup.php?r_date=06-11-2016&img=06-11-2016page-2-1

“Baba Jan's Life Term Sentence will prove fatal to Pakistan”

Daily Bang-e-Sahar, June 15, 2016

Senator Farhatullah Babar stated that Gilgit-Baltistan is not given constitutional identity because Pakistan fears they may become very strong. Political interference in courts decided the judgement against Baba Jan. Baba Jan has been given 22 year jail term. According to Babar this sentence is not good for national security and economic corridor.

http://www.dailybangesahar.com/popup.php?r_date=06-15-2016&img=06-15-2016page-1-2

“Local Bodies Election”

Daily Bang-e-Sahar, June 18, 2016

The Chief Minister stated that Gilgit and Skardu would be made model cities. Modern machinery will be bought for the purpose. Hafizur Rehman further stated that his government believes in development and construction and not on propaganda. Administrators for Gilgit and Skardu are necessary to run the administration. Therefore, officials were promoted under grade 18. Local bodies' elections were supposed to be held 7 years ago. Earlier it was PPP and now PML-N who are not interested in elections at the grassroots level. The main reason is the mind set of these two political parties. Political leaders of these parties do not want that power and authority to be delegated to local level. They are scared of losing influence. That is

the reason the PPP did not hold local bodies elections. Local elections are very important for Gilgit Baltistan. It is at this level that small issues can be resolved easily and very fast. A recently published report indicated that the current chief minister has forgiven the corruption charges of his predecessor. According to media reports, an amount of 90 crore rupees meant for local bodies was taken by Mehdi Shah.

http://www.dailybangesahar.com/popup.php?r_date=06-18-2016&img=06-18-2016page-2-1

Fact sheet on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

Total area of Jammu and Kashmir	222,236 sq kms
Area of under illegal Pakistani occupation (PoK = AJK + Gilgit Baltistan)	78114 sq kilometres
Area of J&K under Chinese occupation <i>Area ceded to China by Pakistan</i>	42,685 sq kms 5,180 sq kms
Together Pak-China	120,799 sq kms
Area with India	101437 sq kms

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

Area ceded to China by Pakistan: 5180 sq. kilometres (Area of Shaksgam Valley)

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

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)

Area: 13,297 square km

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

Capital: Muzaffarabad

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

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

President: Sardar Yaqoob Khan

Prime Minister: Chaudhry Abdul Majeed

AJK Council: Total 12 members

AJK Legislative Assembly: Total seats are 49

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

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

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

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

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

Gilgit-Baltistan

Area: 72,496 sq. kilometers

Population: 870,347 (1998 population census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: 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, Khowar, Dom, Gujjar, Rajput and Kashmiri

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

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

Gilgit-Baltistan Council: Total 15 members

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

Governor of G-B: 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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