

# Weekly POK News Digest

*(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)*

Volume 2 | Issue 30

25 - 31 July 2022

**CPEC Saudi Fund**  
**Local** for Development  
**Government elections**  
**15th** infrastructure  
**amendment POK**  
**Gilgit-Baltistan**



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR  
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES  
मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

No. 1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg  
New Delhi-110 010

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## Political Developments

### **GB finalizes security plan for Muharram**

*Dawn, 25 July 2022*

The Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) administration in consultation with all stakeholders has finalized a plan for maintaining law and order across the region during Muharram. GB home department in its press release said that foolproof security arrangements have been made with the support of the Pakistan Army, police, and security agencies to ensure peace and religious harmony in the holy month. The home secretary has also directed the district administrations to conduct consultation with committees working on peace and harmony, and religious leaders of all sects and police in their respective districts.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1701438/gb-finalises-security-plan-for-muharram>

### **Rajnath's Kashmir remarks unwarranted: Pakistan FO**

*The Express Tribune, 25 July 2022*

Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) 'strongly condemned' Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's 'distorted' remarks about the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, terming them 'unwarranted and unacceptable.' While responding to Rajnath Singh's remarks, the FO, in a statement said that the minister, in his remarks, 'distorted the well-established historical facts about the Jammu & Kashmir dispute', and added that he also leveled 'baseless allegations' and hurled 'threats' against

Pakistan. The FO further said that this is not the first time that a senior Indian politician has tried to cast 'aspersions on the legitimate, indigenous and just freedom struggle of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir' (IIOJK), added that 'provocative' statements by Indian political figures cannot alter the reality of 'IIOJK.' The FO 'advised' India to introspect as to why, despite 'imposing draconian laws', holding the entire valley under 'military siege' for decades, imprisoning thousands of 'innocent Kashmiris' and their 'true' representatives, and 'wanton killing' of over 100,000 Kashmiris, it has not been able to smother the flame of 'freedom' from the heart of Kashmiris.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2367653/rajnaths-kashmir-remarks-unwarranted-pakistan>

### **Kashmir committee just a drama, says Mufti Muneeb**

*Pakistan Observer, 25 July 2022*

The former Ruet-e-Hilal (sighting of the new moon) committee chairman and well-known religious scholar Mufti Muneebur Rehman during a press conference at central Awan-i-Sahafat in Muzaffarabad, 'Azad Kashmir' said that the Kashmir committee is a 'drama.' He accused PM Narendra Modi's government of changing the status of 'Indian held Kashmir' to alter the 'demographic' landscape of the held territory in the 'favor' of Hindus. While terming the Pakistan Kashmir Committee a 'drama', he wondered how Gandapur could highlight the Kashmir issue. He was of the view that

the government needed to keep the Kashmir problem alive with all sincerity and said that former president General Pervez Musharraf showed all his cards even before sitting at the dialogue table with the Indian authorities. He said that nation would 'reject' any peace offer at the cost of Kashmir. He maintained that he had no hope from Pakistani politicians who were at each other's throats and claimed that India was 'persecuting' not only 'Muslims' but also other 'minorities' including 'Christians.'

<https://pakobserver.net/kashmir-committee-just-a-drama-says-mufti-muneeb/>

### **Imran slams India for 'continuing torture' of Yasin Malik behind bars**

*The Express Tribune, 26 July 2022*

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan in a statement 'condemned' PM Modi government continuing 'torture' of Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik in Tihar jail, 'forcing' him to go on hunger strike. He urged the international human rights organizations, UNSG, and UNHCHR to take notice of life 'threats' to Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik and called upon the human rights organizations to take action against India and save Yasin Malik's life. He further claimed that Yasin Malik is also being 'denied' the right to personal appearance in the ongoing trial, in complete 'contravention' of legal and democratic norms.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2367946/imran-slams-india-for-continuing-torture-of-yasin-malik-behind-bars>

### **Kashmiris have 'rejected' Indian flag-hoisting ceremony in Srinagar: APHC-'AJK'**

*Pakistan Observer, 27 July 2022*

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference-'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (APHC-AJK) chapter convener, Mahmood Ahmad Saghar has said that Kashmiri people have 'rejected' the hoisting of the Indian flag ceremony at Lal Chowk in Srinagar under the 'shadow of Indian guns.' He claimed that the Indian army and police in 'civilian clothes' participated in the flag-hoisting ceremony while thousands of soldiers were surrounding Lal Chowk. He said that India cannot change the 'disputed reality' of Kashmir through such 'cruel tactics', and urged New Delhi to abandon its traditional 'intransigent policy' on Kashmir and resolve the dispute by giving Kashmiris their inalienable 'right to self-determination.' He further alleged that one million Indian soldiers deployed in the 'occupied territory' are involved in the 'genocide' of Kashmiris to change the Muslim majority status of 'occupied Kashmir', added that despite the heavy deployment of Indian troops, Kashmiri leadership and the people continue to adhere to the 'mission of the martyrs'.

<https://pakobserver.net/kashmiris-have-rejected-indian-flag-hoisting-ceremony-in-srinagar/>

### **APHC-'AJK' worried about the declining health condition of Yasin Malik**

*Pakistan Observer, 28 July 2022*

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference-Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-

AJK) chapter has expressed ‘serious concern’ about the declining health of ‘illegally’ detained Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chairman, Muhammad Yasin Malik. The APHC-‘AJK’ convener, Mahmood Ahmad Saghar said that Yasin Malik was already suffering from various ailments and his health had deteriorated due to ‘denial’ of basic facilities including medical care in the jail. He noted that the Kashmiris’ struggle is not for attaining power but ‘freedom’ from ‘illegal Indian occupation’, added that the ‘killings’, illegal detentions, destruction of houses, and ‘molestation’ of Kashmiri women by Indian ‘soldiers’ cannot stop the ongoing ‘freedom struggle’ in ‘occupied’ Jammu and Kashmir. He paid tributes to the ‘determination’ and ‘courage’ of ‘illegally’ detained Hurriyat leaders, workers, and youth including the APHC chairman Masarrat Aalam Butt, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Aasiya Andrabi among others and demanded their immediate release.

<https://pakobserver.net/aphc-ajk-worried-about-declining-health-condition-of-yasin-malik/>

## **Economic Developments**

### **Supreme Court of ‘AJK’ ordered the suspension of unjustified taxes on electricity**

*Daily Parliament Times, 26 July 2022*

In response to a writ filed by Mirpur Chamber of Commerce and president of District Bar Mirpur, Justice Syed Shahid of the Supreme Court of ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (AJK) ordered

the suspension of unjustified and cruel taxes imposed on electricity bills. He issued an order to the local administration to correct the electricity bills imposed on the consumers while stopping the electricity department of ‘Azad Kashmir’ from collecting further taxes. During the initial hearing on the petition, Justice Shahid suspended the taxes levied on electricity bills, on which fierce protests were going on throughout the state, including in the capital Muzaffarabad. The Supreme Court has ruled that the e-tax (extra tax) levied by the electronics department from consumers and finance tax fuel price adjustment tax has been suspended.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/07/26/supreme-court-of-ajk-ordered-the-suspension-of-unjustified-taxes-on-electricity/>

### **FO rejects ‘preposterous’ remarks by India on CPEC**

*Dawn, 27 July 2022*

Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson in a statement ‘categorically rejected’ the ‘baseless’ and ‘misguided’ remarks made by the official spokesperson of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), calling it an effort to ‘politicize’ the project. The FO spokesperson said that CPEC was a ‘transformational’ project and a harbinger of ‘stability, cooperation and shared development’ for the region, added that as a flagship of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and hallmark of the Pakistan-China All-Weather ‘Strategic Cooperative Partnership’, CPEC provides a vehicle

for the people of the region to break from zero-sum approaches. He said China's investment in CPEC had helped Pakistan overcome the 'energy and infrastructural bottlenecks' that once constrained growth and development. He said that attempts to cast aspersions over CPEC show India's 'insecurity' as well as the 'pursuit of a hegemonic agenda' that has held back socioeconomic development in South Asia for decades.

While 'rejecting' India's 'fallacious assertion' that CPEC impinges on its sovereignty and territorial integrity, the spokesperson pointed out that it was India that was 'illegally occupying' the state of Jammu and Kashmir for over seven decades. He claimed that India's attempts to 'mislead' the international community about the status of Jammu and Kashmir and to 'hide' its 'atrocities' against the Kashmiri people would never succeed. The spokesperson said the Jammu and Kashmir dispute remained an internationally recognized dispute on the United Nations (UN) agenda and 'its solution lies in the exercise of the right of self-determination' following the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1701762/fo-rejects-preposterous-remarks-by-india-on-cpec>

### **GB government to organize gemstones, and minerals exhibition to attract investment**

*The Express Tribune, 27 July 2022*

The government of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) has planned a 'gemstones and

minerals' exhibition in Islamabad to attract investment in the mountainous region known as a 'treasure trove of jewels'. The two-day exhibition starting on Wednesday in Centaurus will have stalls of gemstones from GB and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The chief secretary of the GB government, Mohiuddin Wani said that it's a hidden treasure and I invite all people to come to the exhibition to benefit from it, added that the exhibition is going to offer dealers an opportunity to form market linkages that will ultimately benefit the people and the region. According to estimates, there are over 60 different types of precious and semi-precious stones in GB, with more than 14,000 people involved in artisanal mining. It is in this context, that GB is considered a 'treasure trove of gemstones' with ruby, emerald, topaz, aquamarine, sapphire, and tourmaline found in abundance in the region.

While talking to the media, the secretary of mines and Minerals, Sajjad Haider said that GB had great potential for precious stones but the region is lacking a scientific approach when it comes to exploration and extraction of gemstones. He maintained that the government is doing its level best to adopt a scientific approach in the extraction of the precious stones, adding that the government is trying to showcase the potential of this sector to bring in investment from across the globe for which we have 'favorable laws' in place. According to the exhibition management, the GB governor and chief minister will also participate in the exhibition. According

to experts, Pakistan has not been able to benefit from its natural resources due to a lack of skills, technology, and knowledge in processing mining material and then taking it to national and international markets.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2368116/g-b-govt-to-organise-gemstones-minerals-exhibition-to-attract-investment>

### **Massive potential in Information, hydel, and tourism can be instrumental in stabilizing a state's economy: Chief Secretary of 'AJK'**

*Daily Parliament Times, 28 July 2022*

The chief secretary of the 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) government, Muhammad Usman Chachar while talking to journalists has said that the massive potential in the fields of information, hydel, minerals, and tourism could be greatly helpful in stabilizing the state's economy. While responding to a query, the chief secretary said that the impression being created concerning the reversal of the 13th amendment is wrong, and added that no amendment in the constitution was possible against the will of the elected representatives of 'Azad Kashmir' and Pakistan. While referring to a letter from the federal government, he said that a sub-committee has been constituted to look into the matters regarding the 15th amendment and noted that the 15th amendment does not mean that the financial and administrative powers of the Kashmir government are taken back. He made it clear that the amendment was neither brought to cut off the political or

administrative powers of 'Azad Kashmir' nor was it being introduced to convert 'AJK' into a province. He also said that the establishment of the Tourism Development Authority will not reduce the powers of the 'Azad Kashmir' government.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/07/28/massive-potential-in-information-hydel-tourism-can-be-instrumental-in-stabilizing-states-economy-cs-usman-chachar/>

### **Saudi Arabia to provide 3 billion equipment to 'AJK' varsity**

*The Express Tribune, 29 July 2022*

The government of Saudi Arabia has announced to provide the latest educational equipment worth 03 billion to the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) to further equip the recently completed state-of-the-art King Abdullah campus of the institution. While addressing an agreement-signing ceremony held at the Kashmir House in Islamabad, Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki said that the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) would provide modern educational instructional kits for the science and IT labs of the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Campus of the university. The Saudi Ambassador said that the kingdom, through the SFD, has so far provided more than \$333 million to implement 23 projects in various parts of Pakistan, added that through these grants, quality projects are being completed in the sectors of education, health, and infrastructure development besides cooperating with several

international organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the United Nations Office for Project Services.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2368328/saudi-arabia-to-provide-rs3-billion-equipment-to-ajk-varsity>

### **A high-level committee was formed to hold talks with APPRF: PM of 'AJK'**

*Daily Parliament Times, 31 July 2022*

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Kashmir', Tanvir Ilyas Khan has said that a high-level committee headed by Minister of Law and Tourism Sardar Faheem Rabbani has been established that would hold negotiations with the All Parties People's Rights Forum (APPRC) at Rawalakot to settle the issues amicably. During a meeting with cabinet ministers, legislators, and party leaders he said that the government was ready to remove the ambiguity being created by some vested interests regarding the 15th Constitutional Amendment and the Tourism Act. The public, he added, was being misled by feeding wrong and baseless information. He emphasized that the PTI government would not take or accept any decision contrary to Kashmiris' 'national interests', the unity and identity of the state, and the freedom movement of Kashmir.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/07/31/high-level-committee-formed-to-hold-talks-with-apprf-pm-ajk/>

### **From Vernacular Urdu Media**

#### **'AJK' president urged the world community to take the initiative in resolving the Kashmir conflict and called for justice for Kashmiris**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, 25 July 2022*

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has said that the international community should play its due role to resolve the prolonged Kashmir dispute to ensure durable peace in South Asia, noting that the peace in South Asia, is inescapably linked to the settlement of Kashmir dispute. The 'AJK' president expressed these views during his meeting with ambassadors and diplomats of the United State of America, Norway, and Bulgaria in Islamabad. The president said that the world community should 'influence' the Indian government to implement the UN resolutions and let the people of Kashmir decide their future peacefully. While referring to the 'appalling situation' in the 'Indian occupied Kashmir' (IoK), he said that the situation in the 'IoK' demands urgent attention from the international community, and added that the Kashmir issue has been the cause and consequence of the continued unrest and bloodshed in the region. During the event, Norwegian Ambassador Albert Ilsaas, Bulgarian Ambassador Irena Gancheva, and American embassy political section officer Melissa, Jessica Pfleiderer, Eric, and others were also present.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Resize-of-F-26.jpg>

## **LG elections to be held on a party basis in 'AJK:' CEC**

*Mahasib, 27 July 2022*

The chief election commissioner of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Abdur Rashid Sulehriya said that the Local Government elections in 'AJK' will be held on a party basis in all districts. He said that all arrangements for holding local government elections in a free, fair, and transparent manner have been finalized, and added that a 12.5 percent quota has been allocated for women and every local council will have at least two seats each for women and youth. He further said that the final polling scheme will be issued on 15th August.

<https://mahasib.com.pk/epaper/muzaffarabbad.php>

## **Yasin Malik's condition is critical due to his hunger strike: Mushaal Hussein Mullick**

*UrduPoint, 28 July 2022*

Mushaal Hussein Mullick has said that Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik's condition is critical due to his hunger strike in Tihar Jail in India and his life is in grave danger. She said that the world's criminal silence on the behavior of Indian courts with Yasin Malik is regrettable, and added that human rights organizations should take notice of the human rights violation of Yasin Malik. She further said that Yasin Malik has been on a hunger strike for the past several days due to which his body was dehydrated, fluids were being given to him through injection, but they were not enough for him, and added that

Yasin Malik was kept in the most sensitive cell of Tihar Jail before he was shifted to the hospital when his health deteriorated.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/kashmir/live-news-3218238.html>

## **PM 'AJK' concerned over the worsening health condition of Yasin Malik and the silence of the International Community**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, 30 July 2022*

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) Tanveer Ilyas Khan while voicing his serious concern over the 'deteriorating' health condition of jailed Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik has urged the international community to play its due role to save Malik's life. He said that due to the continued hunger strike, 'we fear that the Indian authorities 'intend' to slowly push the Hurriyat leaders to 'death' by detaining and 'depriving' him of medical and other basic facilities. He said that it was unfortunate that international media and human rights organizations have maintained complete silence over the ill-treatment meted out to Yasin Malik. He further stressed that rather than watching the Yasin Malik situation like a mute spectator, the world community must shun its policy of 'indifference and apathy' towards Kashmiris and play their timely role in mitigating the Kashmiri's sufferings.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Resize-of-F-30.jpg>

### **Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan's mission was to integrate Kashmir into Pakistan: 'AJK' PM**

*UrduPoint, 30 July 2022*

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir', Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that Ghazi-e-Millat (warrior/leader of the community), Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan's 'sole mission' was to rid his nation from the Hindu 'slavery' and make Kashmir a 'part of Pakistan.' While speaking on the occasion of the 19th anniversary of Sardar Ibrahim Khan, he said that the deceased leader's life (from 1915 to 2003) has been a mixture of many ups and downs but he never compromised on his ideals, adding that his role in the Kashmir's 'freedom struggle' would be remembered for a long time in the annals of Kashmir history. The 'AJK' PM said that Ibrahim Khan started a strong movement against Dogra Raj under crucial circumstances and along with the Kashmiri representative, he unanimously decided to link their fate with Pakistan by adopting the 'historic accession' to Pakistan resolution on July 19, 1947. While reiterating his pledge to continue the mission of the deceased leader the PM said that the Kashmiris will continue the 'freedom struggle' until the last drop of blood. He said that Kashmiris would never compromise on their identity and rights, and added that India wants to 'erase' the political, religious, and cultural identity of Kashmiris.

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-3221823.html>

### **Ghazi-e-Millat played a key role in the liberation struggle: 'AJK' President**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, 31 July 2022*

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that Ghazi Millat Sardar Ibrahim was not only the first founding president of 'Azad Kashmir' but also played a key role in the 'liberation struggle' that culminated in the shape of 'Azad Kashmir.' While addressing a function on the 19th anniversary of Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan at Kashmir House, the 'AJK' president said that the deceased leader became the president of the state soon after the establishment of government in the 'liberated territory' on October 24, 1947, and has served the people of Azad Kashmir in different capacities. During the occasion, 'AJK' president renewed his pledge to protect and promote the Kashmir issue at the international level and expose Indian 'brutalities' to the world.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/1-7.jpg>

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**Compiled by**  
Mohd. Usman Bhatti

**Edited By**  
Dr. Smruti S Pattanaik

## Disclaimer

*PoK weekly 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 edited and abridged to provide clarity. MP-IDSA is not responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the news items.*



**MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES**

No. 1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg  
New Delhi-110 010

Telephone: 91-11-26717983; Fax: 91-11-26154191

Website: [www.idsa.in](http://www.idsa.in); Email: [pokdigest@gmail.com](mailto:pokdigest@gmail.com)