

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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POK Muslim digitization Hands Gilgit-Baltistan anti-terrorism law



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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Political Developments

Sarwar vows to raise his voice for Yasin Malik

Pakistan Observer, 1 August 2022

The chairman of 'All Parties Task Force on Yasin Malik', Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar met with Mushaal Mullick and her family. He demanded that Pakistan's government should immediately and comprehensively raise the issue of the hunger strike and 'Indian atrocities' carried out on Yasin Malik in the international forums. Sarwar also informed Mushaal Mullick about the submission of a petition to the British parliament to get Yasin Malik a 'fair trial' and added that the issue will be raised in the British parliament again after the summer recess. He further appreciated all British members of Parliament, Kashmiri-related organizations, individual Pakistanis, and Kashmiris who helped and managed to get more than 12 thousand signatures on a paper petition for Yasin Malik's fair trial. While talking to Mushaal Mullick, he said that if the life of Yasin Malik is harmed in the jail, only PM Narendra Modi' will be responsible for it, added that the international organizations must end their 'shameful silence' and take immediate notice of Indian government atrocities on Yasin Malik. He said that if the Muslim Ummah remains silent on this matter, the history of humanity will never forgive them, noting that it is good that all the political and religious parties of

Pakistan are always united on the issue of Kashmir.

<https://pakobserver.net/sarwar-vows-to-raise-voice-for-yasin-malik-2/>

JIT to probe killing of two men in GB violence

Dawn, 2 August 2022

The Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) government decided to constitute a joint investigation team (JIT) to investigate the firing incident in Gilgit which left two young men dead and 17 others injured. During the Muharram processions, two men belonging to the Shia community were killed when two groups clashed at Yadgar Chowk, near Gilgit, while a ceremony for the hoisting of Alam (flag) of Hazrat Imam Hussain was underway in the area. As per the GB chief secretary Mohyuddin Ahmed Wani, the home department had been directed to issue a notification for the formation of the JIT immediately. In the meantime, an apex committee presided over by GB Chief Minister Khalid Khurshid also reviewed the law and order situation in the area. The committee meeting was attended by the chief secretary, inspector general of police, home secretary, and representatives of GB Scouts, Rangers, ISI, and IB. The meeting was informed that steps are being taken to arrest the miscreants involved in the firing incident.

The committee was informed that 45 miscreants, along with weapons were arrested on Sunday night in a crackdown launched by the law-

enforcement agencies after the incident. The committee was further informed that the family of two young men killed in the incident would be paid one million each and all the injured would be given 300,000 each. Besides, all medical expenses of the injured would be borne out by the GB government. Meanwhile, the opposition leader from PPP, PML-N, and JUI-F in the GB assembly has condemned the firing incident in Gilgit.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1702793/jit-to-probe-killing-of-two-men-in-gb-violence>

Pakistan to Continue Support to Kashmir Cause: Balochistan Assembly Speaker

The Nation, 2 August 2022

The acting speaker of the Balochistan Assembly, Sardar Babar Khan Musakhail said that the people of Balochistan will continue to support Kashmiris in their 'struggle for self-determination.' While talking to the media, he said that August 5, Youm-e-Istehsal (Day of exploitation and misery) reminds us of the 'inhuman act' of the 'fascist Modi government', added that it was on the 5th August 2019 that the special constitutional status of 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJ&K) was scrapped by the PM Modi government. He said that the people of Balochistan will stand with Kashmiris brethren. He reiterated that the Balochistan government, political parties, and people from all segments of society will continue to provide political, diplomatic, and moral support to the

'freedom struggle' of Kashmiris, and added that a 'Zionist-style settlement' is being done to evict people from their homeland. He said that the 'freedom struggle' of Kashmiris will surely reach its logical conclusion and the sun of 'freedom of Kashmir' will rise soon.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/08/02/pakistan-to-continue-support-to-kashmir-cause-sardar-babar/>

APHC-'AJK' leader urges OIC, UN to support Kashmir solution

Pakistan Observer, 3 August 2022

The All Party Hurriyat Conference-'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (APHC-AJK) leader Muhammad Farooq Rehmani has said that since Jammu and Kashmir has become history's 'tragic state', it is out of the question to surrender its cause, character, and historical identity. It is imperative to raise voice for the political freedom of the 'occupied territory.' He said that the 13 million people of Jammu and Kashmir have the right to decide their future and they cannot allow anyone to change the character of the territory, anywhere in any manner, stressing that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and other 'civilized states' believing in the dignity of nations-states and their fundamental rights should extend and reiterate their full-fledged support to 'Kashmiris' struggle' on 5 August 2022.

The people of AJK are continuously offering 'sacrifices' for the 'noble cause of freedom,'. He drew attention to the Surankot-Poonch 'massacre' of 1998, when on the fateful intervening night

of August 3 and 4, 1998, 19 persons, 16 males, and 13 females were killed at the house of Hassan Muhammad Sheikh at Sailan village Surankote. He said that an inquiry conducted by 'IIOJK's Human Right Commission ruled out the 'involvement' of any militants, indicating that it was carried out by the 'Indian army.' He urged that every State and institution must stand by the cause of 'freedom' for Jammu and Kashmir and urged upon the UN to implement the international resolutions to give 'freedom' and the 'right of self-determination' to the inhabitants of the State as it existed on the day of partition of India in 1947.

<https://pakobserver.net/farooq-rehmani-urges-oic-un-to-support-kashmir-solution/>

India's 5th August move was a conspiracy to convert Kashmiri Muslims into a minority: 'AJK' president

Daily Parliament Times, 4 August 2022

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir', Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry said that India's 5th August 2019 move was the 'racist regime's dangerous plan aimed at 'converting' Muslim majority into a minority. While talking to the media on the eve of 'Exploitation Day' (referred to as 05 August 2019), he said that all the actions which India has taken since 05 August 2019 were in flagrant violation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. While lamenting the international community's 'deafening silence' over the issue, he said that in a 'brazen

violation' of international law Indian regime stripped Kashmir of its identity, noting that by changing the age-old domicile law Indian government has fundamentally 'deprived' the people of their rights guaranteed to them under article 35-A. He claimed that after 5th August 2019, Indian authorities have issued 'fake domiciles' to over four million Hindus hailing from different parts of India. He added that Indian army soldiers, government officials, and their families were being settled in Kashmir under a systematic plan to change population ratio of the 'occupied valley.' While paying tributes to Kashmiris for their 'resilience', he said that Kashmiris despite facing the 'worst' kind of 'state terrorism' have continued their struggle, and emphasized that the people of 'Azad Kashmir' and Pakistan stand shoulder to shoulder with Kashmiri brethren in their just 'struggle for the right to self-determination.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/08/04/indias-5th-august-move-was-a-conspiracy-to-convert-kashmiri-muslims-into-a-minority-barrister-sultan/>

Security tightened in Gilgit

Dawn, 5 August 2022

The police tightened security arrangements in Gilgit amid tension in the city after the violence which claimed two lives and left 22 people injured last week. While addressing a press conference in Gilgit, DIG of Police Farman Ali said that five FIRs had been registered under the anti-terrorism law

in connection with the July 30 clash. He said that out of 18 people suspected of involvement in the violence, nine had been arrested and raids were underway to arrest the remaining suspects. He further said that 60 suspects had been arrested and weapons recovered from seven of them, while twelve people were released after questioning. He maintained that double riding on motorcycles has been banned in Gilgit and 4G mobile internet will also remain suspended till Ashura. Since the GB government has already set up a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to probe the incident and meanwhile, a control room has been set up in the GB home secretary's office to monitor the law and order situation during Muharram.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1703330/security-tightened-in-gilgit>

Pakistan urges India to reverse the illegal, unilateral action of August 5, 2019

Pakistan Observer, 5 August 2022

The Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Asim Iftikhar has urged India to reverse its 'illegal and unilateral actions' of August 5, 2019, and take necessary steps to create an environment conducive to meaningful dialogue for peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute. While speaking at his weekly news briefing in Islamabad, he said that India has issued millions of 'fake domiciles' aimed at 'demographic engineering' to turn the Kashmiri Muslim majority into a minority in their land. He said India has employed 'censorship', and 'crackdown' on civil

society, human rights defenders, lawyers, and journalists, who are 'harassed and persecuted' under the 'draconian laws.'

He further said that India's 'illegal' steps to undermine the internationally recognized disputed status of 'occupied Jammu and Kashmir' and to alter the demographic structure of the 'occupied Jammu and Kashmir' in violation of international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions, added that since August 2019, at least 660 Kashmiris have been martyred by 'Indian occupation forces' in 'occupied Kashmir.' He claimed that despite all these actions, India has 'miserably failed' to stifle the spirit of the Kashmiri people, who continue to stand firm in their 'total rejection' of Indian 'illegal occupation.' He said the Pakistani nation will join the Kashmiris in 'occupied Kashmir', 'Azad Kashmir', and the world over in observing Youme-Istehsal to denounce the Indian 'atrocities in occupied Kashmir.'

<https://pakobserver.net/pak-urges-india-to-reverse-illegal-unilateral-action-of-aug-5-2019/>

Economic Developments

Muslim Hands, NRSP sign MoU for collaboration for Rural Development in 'AJK' and Pakistan

Daily Parliament Times, 1 August 2022

The United Kingdom (UK) based Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) - Muslim Hands along with Pakistan based National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU)

in London to launch mass public welfare projects, including the executions of various socio-economic developments through mutual collaboration and cooperation in various rural parts of Pakistan and 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' (AJK). Both of the organizations have agreed that the Pakistani diaspora in the UK shall be presented with the initiation of development work in their home villages/towns in 'AJK'/Pakistan in the form of a 'Village Development Plan' or 'adopt a village' along with offering business partnerships with Pakistani Diaspora in terms of establishing and investing into social enterprises in 'AJK'/Pakistan.

The MOU was signed between Muslim Hands and NRSP on 31st July 2022 in London UK in the presence of Chairman/CEO Muslim Hands, Pir Syed Lakhte Hassanain, and Chairman NRSP, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan along with CEO NRSP, Dr. Rashid Bajwa. As per the MOU, Muslim Hands and NRSP shall work together to develop a program strategy, digitization of the process for close monitoring of interventions for both organization and donors, and carry out social mobilization in AJK/Pakistan and in the UK to form community support groups in implementation villages and donor groups in the UK. The components that shall be focused on in the village development plan include; skill development, transfer of productive assets, solar housing, access to financial services, and social enterprises at the household level.

Whereas at the village level interventions shall focus on; access to clean drinking water, access to renewable energy solutions for irrigation and lighting of schools, health facilities, and education. A comprehensive program under the name of WISE (water, immunization, sanitation, and education) at the union council level shall also be planned.

In addition, the establishment of district-level diaspora facilitation centers to support (i) alternate dispute resolutions for social, economic, and lands issues, and (ii) facilitation of multiple registration/certifications matters related to different public sector organizations like the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Land revenues, Educational equivalent certification, etc, (iii) exploring the visiting spots in Pakistan/'AJK', (iv) orientation/refreshers about relevant migration laws before departure to respective destinations abroad, etc.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/08/01/muslim-hands-nrsp-sign-mou-for-collaboration-for-rural-development-in-ajk-pakistan/>

Trade centers in Gilgit remain shut

Pakistan Observer, 1 August 2022

Following the tense situation in Gilgit, all business and trade centers in the city remained shut on Sunday on the order of the Apex Committee after two people died and more than 10 others were injured in a clash between two groups. The Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) home

secretary Iqbal Hussain said that situation in Gilgit city was under control and he maintained that the disruptive elements would be arrested soon. He stressed that some people tried to portray an ordinary fight between two groups as a sectarian clash and maintained that fool-proof security arrangements had been taken in the GB because of Muharram-ul-Haram.

<https://pakobserver.net/trade-centres-in-gilgit-remain-shut/>

No plan to withdraw administrative, or financial powers from 'AJK:' Kaira

Dawn, 4 August 2022

The adviser to Pakistan Prime Minister (PM) for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Qamar Zaman Kaira asserted that there were no plans to withdraw the financial, administrative, or any other authority already given to the 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) government 'except for the removal of some anomalies in AJK Constitution.' He said that he and his party are the ones who have given constitutions and rights and stressed that we believe in devolving powers and not centralizing them. He was asked to clarify his position on a draft of the 15th constitutional amendment that his ministry had recently floated, he said, he was unable to understand why a storm in the teacup had been created on this issue. He claimed that the draft had been prepared during the PTI and PML-N governments in Islamabad and Muzaffarabad, respectively. He further said that he has just thrown it open to solicit suggestions from the

stakeholders to remove anomalies in the 'AJK' constitution because the constitution and laws are living documents and should keep on undergoing amendments following the demands of the time and situation. He also maintained that whatever the 'proposed amendments', they cannot and will not come into force unless agreed to by the 'AJK' government and political parties and subsequently approved by the 'AJK Legislative Assembly.'

In response to a reporter's query that whether India's 05 August 2019 move was a 'fixed match' with Pakistan, he responded that this is a 'sensitive issue' and 'I should not talk about it randomly', and added that in his view no Pakistani politician, including Imran Khan and Ziaul Haq, was the enemy of Pakistan. In response to a question, the adviser claimed that the 'AJK' council was bereft of funds and its employees were 'drawing salaries' from the 'federal government' in the shape of 'grants.' However, his reply was in 'sharp contrast' to the 'factual position', as since the passage of the 13th amendment in June 2018 funds for payment of salaries and allowances to council members and employees were allocated in the 'AJK's budget. While replying to a question on the 'prohibited funding case', he said the law would take its course in this regard and added that we are neither 'accelerating nor delaying it.'

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1703091/no-plan-to-withdraw-administrative-financial-powers-from-ajk-kaira>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

JKLF concerned about Yasin Malik's deteriorating health in the Tihar jail

Mahasib, 2 August 2022

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) acting chairman Raja Haq Nawaz Khan along with other members of the organization has expressed their deep concern over 'illegally' detained chairman of JKLF Yasin Malik's deteriorating health in Tihar Jail. The spokesperson of the JKLF said that despite the low heart rate and blood pressure, the Indian government has shifted him back from the hospital to the jail in a 'semi-dead state', where no one is being informed about his condition. The spokesman 'condemned this inhumane, undemocratic and illegal behavior' of India and appealed to the United Nations and other world human rights organizations to intervene to save the life of Yasin Malik. During a press briefing, the spokesperson appealed to the people of Jammu Kashmir to observe August 5, 2022, as a 'Black Day', a Day of Protest, and a Day of 'Exploitation.'

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

Pakistan to mark Youm-e-Istehsal on August 5 in solidarity with 'IIOJK' people

UrduPoint, 2 August 2022

Pakistan will observe Youm-e-Istehsal on August 05 to mark the third year of the Indian 'military siege' of 'Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and

Kashmir' (IIOJK) and denounce the 'illegal, immoral and unconstitutional' step to strip 'IIOJK' of its special status. The government of Pakistan and 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) have planned a series of activities including seminars and conferences to mark the Youm-e-Istehsal and express solidarity with the 'oppressed' Kashmiri people while rallies in their support would be staged across the country with participation of people from all walks of life. The whole nation will give a message to their Kashmiri brethren that the people of Pakistan would always stand with them in their 'just struggle for the right to independence and against the 'atrocities' committed by the 'Indian forces.'

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/is/amabad/national-news/live-news-3224945.html>

Former PM of 'AJK' invites Tanvir Ilyas to APC on Kashmir, 15th amendment

Mahasib, 3 August 2022

The former Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan called on the PM of 'AJK' Sardar Tanvir Ilyas Khan and extended him the invitation to participate in the All Parties Conference (APC) on Kashmir and 15th Amendment being held on August 7. While speaking at the event, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan said that there would be no compromise whatsoever on the 13th amendment, which had led to political, administrative, and financial

autonomy of the government of the state of 'AJK.' While referring to India's 5th August 2019 move, the PM said that it was primarily the 'agenda' of the BJP's mother organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The main purpose of the move, he noted, was to convert the majority of Kashmiri Muslims into a minority and to 'rob' the state of its Muslim identity. He added that Kashmiris have out rightly 'rejected' the move. While terming the Indian move as 'illegal', the former PM Raja Farooq Haider Khan said that the 'abysmal situation' in the 'Indian-held territory' demands that all the political parties of the 'AJK' including Hurriyat leaders should adopt a clear-cut stance on the issue.

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

Resettlement of Kashmiri refugees is the priority of the government: Qamar Zaman

UrduPoint, 4 August 2022

The advisor to the Prime Minister (PM) on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Qamar Zaman has directed the concerned authorities that the tendering process for the construction of houses for Kashmiri refugees should be completed soon, adding that the settlement of Kashmiri refugees is the priority of the government. He further said that the All Party Conference (APC) of 'Azad Kashmir' has been called to formulate a plan of action on the Kashmir issue. While addressing the Kashmiri refugees at the refugee camps in Muzaffarabad, he said that on the instructions of the PM, he will not

allow any reduction in aid to the refugees. He further said that the case of 'freedom of Kashmir' is the case of every Pakistani, and added that every Pakistani is by your side in the struggle for the completion of Pakistan. He said that PM Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari highlighted the issue of Kashmir in all forums of the world, including America, Europe, and Asia. He further said that despite the financial difficulties, 3 billion rupees have been provided for the construction of 1314 houses for the refugees and stressed that concrete steps are being taken to increase the living allowance of the refugees.

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/national-news/live-news-3226639.html>

India's actions on August 5, 2019, were part of a long-term plot to deprive Kashmiris of their unique identity status: 'AJK' PM

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 5 August 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir', Tanveer Ilyas Khan said that India's 5th August 2019 move was a 'deep-rooted conspiracy' to 'rob Kashmiris of their language, history, and ethno cultural identity.' In his message on the 'eve of Exploitation Day,' he said that 5th August 2019 was the darkest day in Kashmir's recent history, and added that India's 'apartheid regime' stripped the region of its special status by abrogating article 370 and 35 A thereby 'holding hostage' millions of Kashmiris at 'gunpoint.' He claimed that all the

ethnoreligious communities living in Kashmir including Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists have ‘realized’ now how India was ‘snatching’ away from Kashmiri's lands and reducing them to ‘second class citizens.’ He said that the ‘AJK’ government would continue to play its role to promote and project the Kashmir cause at the international level.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Resize-of-F-05.jpg>

Pakistan will continue to raise its voice for the brothers and sisters of ‘occupied Kashmir:’ PM of Pakistan

Daily Pakistan, 5 August 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan, Shahbaz Sharif said that on August 5, 2019, India took ‘illegal and unilateral actions’ in ‘occupied’ Jammu and Kashmir and it has been three years and India continued its ‘inhumane military siege’ and maintained indifference to the ‘untold suffering’ of the Kashmiri people. He said that the BJP-RSS nexus has violated the UN Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. He further said that the Indian government is shamelessly and brazenly advancing its ‘Hindutva agenda’ to change the ‘demographic structure’ in ‘occupied Jammu and Kashmir.’ He claimed that the ‘occupying forces’ have imposed strict restrictions on the media since August 5, 2019, turning it into the biggest prison on the planet through the military. He said that the situation has seriously deteriorated in the last

three years, added that the Kashmiri people are still under ‘military siege’ and their senior leadership is imprisoned and their youth are subjected to ‘indiscriminate extrajudicial killings’ by the ‘occupation forces.’ He said that Pakistan will continue to be the voice of its Kashmiri brothers and sisters, whose ‘eternal sacrifices’ are still ongoing, and we will provide all possible support for the full realization of their ‘legitimate right.’

<https://dailypakistan.com.pk/05-Aug-2022/1470730>

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Disclaimer

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