

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

Volume 2 | Issue 32

08 - 14 August 2022

local elections **POK**
Interim Constitution
tourism **authority**
revenue **authority**
Gilgit-Baltistan



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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Political Developments

FO rejects New Delhi's 'ludicrous comments' on OIC stance

Dawn, 8 August 2022

The Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) 'categorically rejected' the 'ludicrous comments' and 'fallacious claims' made by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) regarding a statement of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In a statement which was circulated at the United Nations (UN) headquarters, the OIC general secretary in a statement 'reiterated' its earlier stance that India's August 5, 2019, 'illegal' action could not alter the disputed status of Jammu and Kashmir. He called for implementing UNSC resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir, which recognise the right of the Kashmiri people to decide their future. The FO spokesperson said in a press release that India's 'hubris' in this regard was deplorable, and added that the OIC is the largest multilateral forum of Muslim countries representing more than 1.7 billion Muslims and has always been vocal in support of the 'legitimate rights' of the Kashmiri people, who had 'suffered unspeakably' from India's seven-decades-long 'illegal occupation' and 'unabated oppression.' The spokesperson said India would not succeed in misleading the international community by claiming socio-economic growth and development in 'IIOJK' and added that no amount of 'repetition' would turn falsehood into

truth. He said that in the interest of justice as well as durable peace and security in South Asia, India must honour its commitment to the Kashmiris and to the world community by faithfully implementing the UNSC resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1703859/fo-rejects-new-delhis-ludicrous-comments-on-oic-stance>

Pakistan-India 'backchannel' talks hit a dead end

The Express Tribune, 8 August 2022

A source with knowledge of the situation told The Express Tribune Newspaper that although the backchannel talks between India and Pakistan have been 'ongoing,' nothing is progressing. It has been claimed that there has been a 'desire' from 'both the sides' to break the impasse but the issue is how to move forward from this point onwards. The sources said 'backchannel' contacts that 'began' during the PTI government's tenure picked up pace in April after the change of government, however, despite 'intense' backchannel diplomacy, the two sides were not 'willing to concede an inch' on their respective issues. While Pakistan is keen that India must take steps with regards to Kashmir before any process of normalisation of ties begins, New Delhi, however, is more interested in Islamabad first exploring the option of resuming 'bilateral trade.' But India instead of offering any 'concessions' on Kashmir 'hardened' its stance. Some of the developments including efforts to

hold G-20 summit-related events in Srinagar did not go down well with Pakistan. Consequently, the 'friction' in the relationship prevented Pakistani and Indian foreign ministers from interacting with each other at the recent meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Tashkent. Moreover, the relations between the two countries have remained strained for years now and took a turn for the worse in August 2019, when India 'unilaterally revoked' the special status of the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region. But even before the government of Prime Minister Shehbaz took charge, the two countries were talking to each other, albeit quietly. Those contacts led to the 'renewal of the ceasefire' understanding in February 2021 and the truce is still holding with no major incident of ceasefire violation. Since the new government came to power in Islamabad in April, there has been a 'renewed push' by the two sides to find some way out. The source, however, said that the chances of an 'immediate' breakthrough are slim given the political 'uncertainty' in Pakistan and 'tough preconditions' attached by both sides for any resumption of dialogue. Shehbaz in his maiden address to the nation asked India to 'reverse' the August 5, 2019 actions so that both sides could engage in talks for the resolution of all outstanding issues, including Kashmir. India, the sources said, is inclined to their engagement but 'reluctant' to offer something that would help Pakistan resume the dialogue. The sources said that Western powers, including the United States

and the UK, were also pushing for defusing tensions and opening some formal channels of communication between the two South Asian neighbours.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2370099/pak-india-backchannel-talks-hit-dead-end>

Kashmiris raising voice against 'Modi's fascism' on every forum: Mushaal

Daily Times, 8 August 2022

The chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organisation, Mushaal Hussein Mullick has said that Kashmiris at every forum are raising voices against the 'fascism' of PM Modi being carried out in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK). While talking to local media, she said that people of the 'occupied' valley were 'forced' to live under such a condition where they could not even 'breathe freely.' She said that the resolution of the United Nations (UN) gave Kashmiris the right to self-determination and that the Kashmiri people had already 'rejected' revocation of articles 370 and 35-A, despite the imposition of countless 'sanctions' and 'restrictions' under the 'draconian' Public Safety Act. She said the Indian government was silencing the 'indigenous freedom movement' of Kashmiris using all 'unfair' and 'unlawful means.'

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/978804/kashmiris-raising-voice-against-modis-fascism-on-every-forum-mashal/>

APC rejects the 15th Amendment, demanding the immediate release of Poonch prisoners

Daily Parliament Times, 8 August 2022

The All Parties Conference (APC) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) hosted by the former Prime Minister of 'Azad Kashmir' Raja Farooq Haider Khan and 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) leadership 'condemned' the 'illegal annexation' of Kashmir by India. The conference members have urged Islamabad to immediately highlight globally the 'illegal actions' being taken by India in the valley and raise the Kashmir issue at the platform of the United Nations Security Council, the European Union, and the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers. The proposed 15th amendment and the establishment of a tourism authority have been completely rejected in the declaration of the APC, and the government of 'Azad' Kashmir has been demanded to release Poonch prisoners. The declaration further told that the 13th Amendment reflects the aspirations of the people of 'Azad' Kashmir. There will 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', and added that it should be clear to all quarters that no Kashmiri will accept the undoing of the 13th amendment in any form.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/08/08/apc-rejected-15th-amendment-demanding-immediate-release-of-poonch-prisoners/>

Indian 'oppression' persists

Editorial, The Express Tribune, 9 August 2022

The Indian government continues to 'suppress' Kashmiri Muslims' fundamental rights by 'barring' Muharram processions and 'attacking' those who attempted to peacefully protest the 'ban.' Even though the processions did not appear to involve any attempts to agitate against the Indian government, members of the ruling BJP and their front men in the media have already started trying to portray participants as separatists. And the Ministry of External Affairs had the 'gall' to accuse them of 'bigotry' and encouraging religion-based divisions in India in the face of international criticism, including from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (IOC) and several other countries that are generally friendly with India. It should be noted that the BJP, a political party whose policies are mostly based on Hindutva, or, to put it more accurately, a 'Hindu-supremacist ideology', runs India's federal government. Since taking power in 2014, the BJP government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several state governments have continually stunned observers with how 'brazen' they can be in their 'bigoted, anti-minority' policymaking and failure to stop acts of communal violence against Muslims, Christians, and low caste Hindus. In the meantime, PM Modi's 'fascist' administration has made it nearly impossible for the truth to reach

the Indian media, with the majority of outlets presenting blatant state propaganda and the small number of independent outlets still operating seeing their owners and staff subjected to 'harassment' and 'fabricated' police cases. It appears New Delhi's most recent strategy is to rely on 'Islamophobia' to sway public opinion in its favour by making such patently false and 'hypocritical' claims.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2370168/indian-oppression-persists>

Pakistan 'condemns' ban on Muharram processions

Pakistan Observer, 9 August 2022

The Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) in a statement said that the restrictions on Muharram processions represent complete 'disrespect' and deep-rooted 'prejudice' by the Indian government for the sentiments of the Muslims in 'Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK). The statement further claimed that it is also a 'flagrant violation' of Kashmiris' fundamental right of freedom of religion, and added that 'denying' the Kashmiri Muslims their 'right to worship' and to carry out these processions peacefully is yet another illustration of India's ongoing 'assault' on religious freedoms of minorities, especially Muslims, in 'IIOJK' and India. It is also reflective of the 'Hindutva' driven majoritarian mindset of the 'BJP-RSS' dispensation. The FO urged the international community, the United Nations and other human rights and humanitarian

organisations to hold India to account for its 'suppression' of 'religious rights' which violates international law and conventions.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-condemns-ban-on-muharram-processions/>

A strong Pakistan is a guarantor of the success of Kashmir's 'ongoing freedom movement:' 'AJK' President

Daily Parliament Times, 14 August 2022

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry while applauding the nation on celebrating the 75th Independence Day said that Pakistan is the only nuclear power of the Muslim world, added that 'there are some powers who cannot digest Pakistan's progress but by the grace of almighty Allah Pakistan is heading towards the right direction.' He said that a strong and stable Pakistan has been the 'dream' of Kashmiris living on 'both sides' of the line of control. While terming a strong Pakistan as a 'guarantor' for the success of Kashmir's 'ongoing' 'freedom movement,' he said that Pakistan was 'incomplete' without the 'freedom' of the 'Indian occupied Kashmir' (IOK). While reiterating the government's commitment towards the 'Kashmir cause', he said that 'on the auspicious occasion, we assure the people of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir that we will take their case to every forum in the world.'

While referring to the 'persecution of minorities' in India, he claimed that the 'inhuman treatment' meted out to

minorities has laid bare India's 'shamed' secular face before the world, and added that we are fortunate to have been brought up in a free land. During the event which was also attended by 'AJK' PM among others, the president also paid tributes to officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army and other law enforcement agencies who have sacrificed their lives while protecting the geographical and 'ideological frontiers' of Pakistan. During the event, the 'AJK' PM, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan said that 'Kashmir is the first defence line of Pakistan.' He saluted all those who 'sacrificed' for the establishment of Pakistan and reiterated that 'I believe in Pakistaniyat', adding that getting caught up in 'regionalism' and 'provincialism' was poisonous for the unity and strength of a country. He said that we are all Pakistanis and there is no doubt about it, claiming that Indian 'occupied Kashmir' was 'part and parcel' of our body and that Pakistan is 'incomplete' until the 'independence' of the 'occupied Kashmir.' He also lauded Kashmiri leaders including Syed Ali Geelani, Yasin Malik, Shabbir Shah and Mir Waiz Umar Farooq and others for their 'matchless sacrifices' for the Kashmir cause. The event's ceremony started with the recitation of the Quran followed by national anthems of Pakistan and 'Azad Kashmir'.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/08/14/a-strong-pakistan-is-a-guarantor-for-the-success-of-of-kashmirs-ongoing-freedom-movement-barrister-sultan/>

[Economic Developments](#)

22 MW of electricity should be added to the system by November 2022: GB CM

Urdupoint, 10 August 2022

While speaking during a briefing about the power projects being built by the Department of Electronics, Chief Minister (CM) of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Khalid Khurshid stated that 22 megawatts of electricity should be added to the system by November 2022. He also directed the department of electronics to speed up the construction of ongoing projects. He stressed that by this winter, we will reduce load shedding and improve electricity supply through integrated planning and prompt preparation. The Provincial Secretary of Planning was instructed by the Chief Minister to swiftly provide administrative approval for the electricity projects. The Department of Electronics has been further allocated a 2 billion project for a system upgrade, ABC cables and smart metres, which will be installed to stop electricity theft and enhance the billing system. The Additional Chief Secretary has been instructed by the CM to follow the timeframe established by the Electronics Department regarding ongoing projects and system upgrades.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/gilgit/important-news/live-news-3234820.html>

The creation of a revenue authority in Gilgit-Baltistan is urgently needed: GB CM

UrduPoint, 10 August 2022

The creation of a revenue/tax authority in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), according to Chief Minister Khalid Khurshid, is urgently needed. He said that financial stability for the province will be achieved and there will be a mechanism put in place so that those who are eligible and deserving of assistance can receive it and that comprehensive steps can be made to ensure the welfare of the populace. He pointed out that the different administrations had not previously given much thought to financial stability and that the establishment of the GB Revenue Authority will have a substantial positive impact.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/gilgit/important-news/live-news-3234821.html>

President of 'AJK' inaugurates KPL season 2

Daily Parliament Times, 13 August 2022

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry inaugurated the Kashmir Premier League (KPL) season two. The 'colourful' opening ceremony of the KPL was held at the Narul Stadium in Muzaffarabad which was also attended by the ministers of the 'AJK' government including Chaudhry Muhammad Rasheed, Nisar Ansar Abdali, special assistant to the government for Information

Technology (IT), premier league president Arif Malik and others were present. While addressing the opening ceremony, the 'AJK' president said that KPL was watched by 4.5 crore people, and added that 'linking the inaugural function of this league with Independence Day is a great development which will strengthen the Kashmir issue.' He said that while no 'local events could be held in Srinagar, the management of KPL held this event in 'AJK' for which the Kashmir government would fully cooperate with the Premier League management. The chief secretary to the 'AJK' government, Muhammad Usman Chachar said that the KPL would be broadcasted live in most countries, and added that 37 Kashmiri players were also included in KPL. He claimed that this event will further strengthen the 'unbreakable bond' of the Kashmiri people with Pakistan and the players of 'Azad Kashmir' will get an opportunity to play with the big players of the world.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/08/13/president-ajk-inaugurates-kpl-season-2/>

Pappu Lala Football League Tournament organizes to attract the Youth of 'AJK'

Daily Parliament Times, 14 August 2022

On the occasion of Independence Day of Pakistan, the Shahid Qureshi-Pappu Lala Football League tournament is being organized to attract the youth of 'Tehreek Azadi Kashmir' base camp towards sports and 'protect' the young

generation from social evils. While congratulating the chief organizer Mehtab Ahmed Mir along with the tournament committee, Shahid Qureshi announces five thousand cash for the encouragement of the players and the tournament committee. The event was attended by local players and former footballers.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/08/14/pappu-lala-football-league-tournament-organizes-to-attract-youth-of-ajk/>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

There is mourning everywhere except in 'occupied Kashmir;' the Pakistani government should call the Indian ambassador and record the protest: Shah Mehmood Qureshi

Urdupoint, 8 August 2022

The vice chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Shah Mahmood Qureshi, 'condemned' the Bhartiya Janata Party's (BJP's) 'chauvinistic' decision to ban mourning processions and 'Majalis' in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) during Muharram and demanded the foreign office of Pakistan to record their protest with Indian ambassador in Pakistan. Following his participation in the mourning march, he spoke with the media and stated that while mourning processions and 'Majalis' were planned all over the world, only the people of 'IIOJK' were denied their right to practise their religion by the 'Indian forces.'

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/multan/important-news/live-news-3233346.html>

The superiority of the Indian Army's war equipment cannot reduce the morale of Kashmiris: Ali Raza Syed

Jang, 8 August 2022

On the occasion of Muharram, the chairman of Kashmir Council-European Union (EU), Ali Raza Syed said that Hazrat Imam Hussain raised the banner of righteousness and truth on Ashura and added that the Karbala incident encourages us to uphold human rights and safeguard human ideals. He said that Karbala is the name of the rebellion against injustice and that it contains a message for the Hurriyat conferences to follow the moral course. He stressed that inspired by the powerful message of Karbala, the people of Jammu and Kashmir are now fighting for the 'liberation' of their country, which the 'Indian Army has occupied.' Ali Raza Syed continued by saying that the 'oppressed people' of 'Occupied Kashmir,' who have endured an Indian 'siege, torture, persecution,' and arrests for seven decades, have particularly learned from the tremendous sacrifice of Karbala. According to Ali Raza Syed, the people of 'Occupied Kashmir' have had hardships for a very long time and Kashmiri Muslims have even been 'prohibited' from participating in Muharram processions and gatherings for a very long time. He claimed that after removing 'Occupied' Jammu and Kashmir's special status three years ago, India has upped its 'atrocities' against the 'oppressed Kashmiris', and added that the Indian Army's superior

military hardware cannot demoralise or destroy the Kashmiris because they are on the right path, claiming that the day is not far away when Kashmiris will enjoy victory and freedom. He added that the truth has a powerful force that can vanquish the adversary and added that how long will India continue to 'oppress' Kashmiris?

<https://jang.com.pk/news/1121675>

The PM of 'AJK' criticized the 'curbs' on Muharram processions in 'IoK' and urged the world to pay attention

Mahasib, 11 August 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, has expressed opposition to the Indian 'occupation authorities 'ban' on Muharram processions in 'Indian-occupied Kashmir' (IOK), claiming that the measure has exposed India's 'purported' democracy. The PM referred to the 'ban' on Muharram processions as an 'intrusion' into the religious matters of the Muslims of Kashmir and claimed that minorities residing in India, not just Kashmiris, had been the worst victims of the 'fascist regime's inspired by Hindutva ideology.' He claimed that to silence Kashmiris in the 'occupied territory', the RSS-influenced 'dictatorship' had broken all previous benchmarks for 'brutality' and 'depravity.' The 'AJK' PM claimed that since August 5, 2019, 'occupied' Kashmir has essentially been under Indian 'military blockade' and added that India had 'stripped'

Kashmiris of their civil liberties and rights. He claimed that India was currently planning schemes to alter the region's demographics and added that the delineation of new constituencies was just another plot to lessen the political representation of Muslims in the state assembly. He claimed that more than 42 lakh 'fake domiciles' have been issued to change the population ratio to convert the Muslim majority area into a minority. He argued that the international community should pay close attention to Indian 'atrocities' in Kashmir and make the PM Modi government accountable for its 'crimes' against Kashmiris. He expressed these views while talking to former Prime Ministers of 'AJK', Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan, Sardar Muhammad Yaqub Khan, and Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi among others.

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

Local body elections will be held in 'Azad Kashmir' as soon as possible: 'AJK'PM

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 14 August 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Kashmir', Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan said that local body elections will be held in 'Azad Kashmir' as soon as possible and the power will be transferred to the lower level so that the local bodies could also be active. He said that the issues of constituencies and electoral lists will also be unified and added that all political parties must agree on the conduct of local body

elections. He further said that a parliamentary board will be formed at divisional, district and tehsil levels and reiterated that steps are being taken on a priority basis by the government to conduct transparent, impartial elections in 'Azad Kashmir.' He noted that a 1500 per cent increase in the living allowance of refugees has also been implemented and emphasized that the Ministry of Finance has issued instructions to speed up the process and to increase the pension and salary to obtain funds from the federal government for the increase in salaries and pensions. He said that we are sure that the federal government will 'remove the obstacles' in increasing the salary and pension of the employees. He said that electricity consumers in 'Azad Kashmir' will not be burdened by fuel adjustment and other taxes and added that a committee will be formed to make the Chairman WAPDA accountable in the matter of Mirpur Mangala victims.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/1-4.jpg>

15th Amendment Act 2022 is presented in 'AJK' Legislative Assembly

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 14 August 2022

The 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) government minister, Khawaja Farooq Ahmed presents Interim Constitution (15th Amendment Act, 2022) in 'AJK' Legislative Assembly for debate. The PM of 'AJK' Sardar Tanveer Ilyas,

opposition leader, Chaudhry Latif Akbar, and former PM, Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan among others participated in the debate on the 15th constitutional amendment. The draft was handed over to the 11-member standing committee, comprised of professor Taqdees Gilani, Sardar Faheem Akhtar Rabbani, Khawaja Farooq Ahmed, Chaudhry Rasheed, Pir Mazhar Saeed, and Ms Nabila Ayub among others. The standing committee is expected to meet on Monday and its recommendations will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly session next week. Since it is the 15th amendment to the Interim Act of 'AJK', it is called the 15th Amendment and this amendment has 'nothing' to do with making 'AJK' a province or 'changing' the 'specific identity' of Kashmir. This 15th amendment is 'purely' related to the procedure of local elections and if an attempt will be made to change the 'specific identity of 'Azad Kashmir' in the near or distant future, it will now be called the 16th Constitutional Amendment.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/1-4.jpg>

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Disclaimer

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