

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

Volume 2 | Issue 39

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tourism **Gilgit-Baltistan**
revenue **power**
Gulpur Hydro **electric**
POK **solar and wind**
direct tax **growth**



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

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Political Developments

It is time for the UN to come to Kashmiris' rescue in 'IIOJK'

Pakistan Observer, 26 September 2022

The United Nations (UN) must act quickly to help the Kashmiris in 'Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IOJK) to demonstrate that it is a powerful institution. In a report released by the Kashmir Media Service (KMS), it was stated that the UN should intervene immediately to protect the people of Kashmir from the 'assault' of the Indian government and to carry out its resolutions on Kashmir. The report further added that the UN must quit remaining a mute observer of what is taking place in 'occupied Kashmir' since further silence on its part will give India more 'license' to 'persecute' the people in 'IIOJK.' The report also asked how many more decades of Indian 'repression' of Kashmiris would be necessary before the UN awakens. Only the pertinent UN resolutions, it was said, could resolve the Kashmir problem.

It further claimed that 'fascist Modi' is aiming to 'erase' the distinctive Kashmiri identity by changing the 'demographics' of 'IIOJK' and that it is time for the World Body to reveal the true nature of the 'so-called' democratic India to the world. The world community must bring PM Modi's regime and its troops to justice for their 'crimes' against humanity in 'IIOJK', the report said, and the Kashmir dispute must be settled following UN

resolutions before peace in South Asia can be achieved.

<https://pakobserver.net/it-is-time-for-un-to-come-to-kashmiris-rescue-in-iiojk/>

GB CM Khalid Khurshid challenges judge's appointment in SC

The Express Tribune, 29 September 2022

Khalid Khurshid Khan, the Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), asked the Supreme Court to declare that Javed Ahmed's appointment as a judge of the GB Chief Court was illegal and to revoke it. In his appeal, the chief minister asked the court to rule that GB Governor Syed Mehdi Shah lacked the right to recommend Javed Ahmed for the Chief Court judgeship to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. In addition, it claimed that the top court should also declare that the PM or the federal government has no 'lawful authority' to merely extend the appointment of Justice Malik Inayat-ur-Rehman, Justice Johar Ali Khan, and Justice Raja Shakeel Ahmed for a term of one year, rather duty-bound to confirm such appointments.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1712531/gb-cm-khalid-khurshid-challenges-judges-appointment-in-sc>

India pursuing Israeli model to turn Muslim majority in Kashmir into a minority: Speakers at a Seminar

Daily Parliament Times, 29 September 2022

The speakers at a seminar organized by the Community of Human Rights and Advocacy Center claimed that to

'reduce' the number of Muslims in Kashmir, the Modi-led government of India, which is inspired by the RSS, was using the Israeli model of 'demographic engineering' in Kashmir to turn Muslim majority into a minority. The seminar titled 'Demographic Engineering in Indian occupied Kashmir: Violation of International Law and UNSC Resolutions' was attended and addressed by international law experts, human rights activists, and political activists including Altaf Hussain Wani chairman of Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), Muzamil Ayoub Thakur president Kashmir Freedom Movement, and others.

While referring to the Indian government's unilateral actions it had taken on Kashmir since 2019, they said that depriving Kashmir of its special status by abolishing articles 370 and 35A of the Indian constitution is an 'atrocious assault' on Kashmir's political and national identity. They claimed that annulment of the article 35-A in particular opened floodgates for non-Kashmiris to get them to settle in the region and that paved a way for the BJP to implement its agenda in Kashmir. They said that these laws were specially modified to encourage Hindus to settle in the 'occupied Kashmir' permanently, adding that the policy was akin to Israel's 'model of occupation' of Palestine. They said that establishing separate housing colonies of Pandits, and Sanik colonies in the Kashmir valley were part of the BJP's settler colonialism policy, adding that

changing the electoral map of the state and now granting voting rights to outsiders speaks volumes about the Indian government's 'malicious intention's to undermine the indigenous population's role in the political decision-making process.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/09/29/india-pursuing-israeli-model-to-turn-muslim-majority-in-kashmir-into-a-minority-speakers/>

The government secretly mending fences with India: Imran Khan

Dawn, 30 September 2022

The chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), Imran Khan accused the federal government of 'secretly establishing relations' with India, allegedly, for its own 'business interests' and in complete 'disregard of the sacrifices' of the people of 'India-held' Jammu and Kashmir. The PTI chief, who arrived in the city at the invitation of 'AJK' Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas, was addressing a large gathering in Muzaffarabad. While terming the Kashmiris 'special people' for their ceaseless freedom struggle and at least '100,000 sacrifices' over the past 33 years, the PTI chief assured them that he would not let their struggle die. He recalled that on 05 August 2019, when the 'fascist Narendra Modi-led Indian government' revoked the special status of 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir, his government had severed all ties with New Delhi. He emphasized that every country derives benefits from trade, and added that India is a big country and Pakistan would also have

benefited from trade with it. But my government decided that we would never compromise on the Kashmiris' 'freedom movement.' He claimed that he made it clear that we will normalize relations and trade with India only after the revival of the statehood of 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir. He also asked the people of 'AJK' to prepare themselves to respond to his call and asked them to join his movement.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1712679/govt-secretly-mending-fences-with-india-imran>

No place for Amit Shah in Kashmir, BJP should hold a referendum in the state: Pasban-e-Hurriyat

Daily Parliament Times, 2 October 2022

Uzair Ahmad Ghazali, the chairman of Pasban-e-Hurriyat, has said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government and Amit Shah should have the courage to hold a 'referendum' in the state to ascertain the true will of the Kashmiri people. He claimed that Amit Shah is 'accountable' for the 'genocidal' treatment of Muslims in 'Indian-Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). He said that the Indian Home Minister, who on 05 August 2019, presented the most contentious bill in the Indian Lok Sabha, stripping the state's citizens of all of their 'fundamental human, social, political, and religious rights', is now attempting to divide the inhabitants along linguistic, national, and regional lines to mislead them. Ghazali made a plea to the people, saying that such a 'cruel person' who imprisoned

thousands of Kashmiri citizens in jails after 05 August 2019, martyred 675 children, and thousands of oppressed civilians are victims of oppression on his orders should fully boycott his visit.

He said that the 'rulers' of India cannot maintain a long-term 'military occupation' of the state without the people's will and permission, and claimed that India can 'never succeed' in stifling the spirit of freedom of the Kashmiri people via 'military repression, draconian laws, imprisonment, murder, brutality, and economic constraints.' The state's citizens should continue to be vigilant in defending their homeland by 'rejecting the despicable interests of the Indian rulers.' In protest of the 'contentious' visit of the Indian Home Minister to 'IIOJK', he said that a public march will be organized in 'Azad Kashmir's capital. He said that on 05 October at 10 a.m., citizens will march from Lal Chowk Upper Adda to the United Nations Observer Office in Domel.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/10/02/no-place-for-amit-shah-in-kashmir-bjp-should-hold-referendum-in-the-state-peh/>

Economic Developments

'Azad Kashmir' is nothing short of a tourist paradise: DG of Tourism

UrduPoint, 27 September 2022

The director general of Tourism 'Azad Kashmir', Ms. Tehbih Al-Nis said that the government is making great efforts to expand the tourism industry, and new tourist destinations are being

investigated in the coming days. She said that 'Azad Kashmir' offers enormous potential for eco-tourism and religious tourism, which we should take advantage of to help the locals who live close to the tourist attractions as well as stabilize the state's economy and expand the tourism industry through public-private partnerships. She expressed these views while talking to the media at a function organized by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation on the occasion of World Tourism Day. She stressed that by having a clear strategy for the growth of tourism, 'Azad Kashmir' will move toward economic independence and provide residents with employment opportunities.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-3296326.html>

'Azad Kashmir' and GB have enormous potential in terms of minerals and hydropower: Advisor to PM on 'AJK' and GB affairs

Urdupoint, 28 September 2022

Qamar Zaman Kaira, the advisor to the prime minister for Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and 'Azad Kashmir', formally inaugurated the 102 MW Gulpur Hydropower Project. While speaking at the opening ceremony, Kaira, stated that this project will mark a significant turning point in Pakistan's power strategy since it will open up more chances for significant private investment. According to him, hydropower is crucial for Pakistan because it offers affordable and clean

electricity. It also plays a significant part in developing the economy and opening up job opportunities. He thanked the Korea southeast Power Company Limited (KOEN) for providing this project for the people of Kashmir and hoped that the company would continue to invest in Pakistan in the future. He said that 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) and GB have huge potential in terms of minerals and hydel power and his ministry would provide all possible support to ease the difficulties of all investors.

While comparing Pakistan to other countries that spread environmental degradation globally, he claimed that we are still held responsible for their turpitudes despite producing less than 1% of the total pollution globally. He said, roughly 3.3 million people in Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan and Sindh, have been impacted by climate change, causing crops to be ruined by recent floods and considerable infrastructure to be destroyed. He claimed that Antonio Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General, has also asked developed nations to assist Pakistan in the aftermath of the natural calamity. Taseef H. Farooqui, chairman of the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), stated that the beginning of this project will help to meet the need for energy, as well as create jobs for locals and produce cheap electricity. According to him, the government has concentrated on renewable energy initiatives including hydroelectric, solar and wind to lower

greenhouse gas emissions. Han Seungnam, CEO of Mira Power, a Korean Power Company affiliate, detailed the project to the attendees and explained that it was the first one in Pakistani history to be built on a national park. The project began in 2015, he added.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/kotli/kashmir/live-news-3297541.html>

Conference on World Tourism Day discusses climate change as the largest threat to GB

Dailyk2, 28 September 2022

On World Tourism Day, a conference was held in Gilgit in partnership with the Department of Tourism Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Pakistan Television, and other institutions. Attendees included the speaker of the GB Assembly, Amjad Zaidi, the Tourism Minister Raja Nasir Ali Khan, and many other top officials from the government and other sectors. The speakers and academicians from Karakoram International University (KIU) have drawn attention to the promotion of tourism in GB as well as the detrimental consequences of tourism on the environment. According to speakers, GB offers a wealth of tourism prospects, and that one can not only enhance personal income by encouraging tourism, but they can also generate a lot of money for the local government. While emphasizing that infrastructure is the most important factor in boosting tourism, the speakers noted that tourism, which boosts revenue, also

has detrimental impacts on the ecosystem/environment, for which it is necessary to be prepared in advance as GB is at huge risk of changing climate effects.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/8923>

Bank of 'AJK' total assets reach an all-time high

Business Recorder, 29 September 2022

Bank of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) total asset value has reached the highest level of 27.4 billion which is a record in the last 15 years of history of the financial institution. During the first half of 2022, the assets increased by 4 billion. While presiding over a review meeting, Khawar Saeed, the president and Chief Executive Officer of the Bank, said that in the first half of 2022, the total assets of the bank increased by 4 billion. The value of assets has reached an all-time high of Rs 27.4 billion, while last year's assets reached a level of 23.7 billion with a multi-fold increase. While in the year 2019, the total assets of the bank were only 13.566 billion, which increased to 16.819 billion in 2020, further increased to 23.693 billion rupees in 2021, and in the first half of 2022, the asset value reached the highest level of 27.4 billion. It has been reported that the financial institution moving towards progress under the patronage of the 'AJK' Government and Board of Directors.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40200293/bank-of-azad-jammu-and-kashmirs-total-assets-reach-all-time-high>

'AJK' IRD secures 8.293 billion levies in all forms in the first quarter of the ongoing 2022-23 fiscal year

Daily Parliament Times, 1 October 2022

The provisional revenue collection data for the first quarter of the current fiscal year of 2022–23 have been completed successfully by the state-run Inland Revenue Department (IRD), which is under the jurisdiction of the 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' (AJK) government. Premier Revenue Collecting Agency of the State collected net revenue of 8.293.717 billion during the first quarter of 2022, which ended on September 30th, against the quarterly target of 5.504 billion for both direct and indirect taxes. This represents a 50.68% increase over the target and a 17.79% increase over the revenue collected during the same quarter of the previous year. Commissioner of Income Tax (Direct Taxes) for 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Asim Shoukat Chaudhry, stated that the department has collected 2.792 billion more than anticipated. When the numbers are reconciled, they will be even better. When compared to the assigned target, direct tax growth remained 63.205% above target, while indirect tax growth remained 19.79% over and above target, Asim stated.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/10/01/ajk-ird-secures-rs-8-293-billion-levies-in-all-forms-in-first-quarter-of-ongoing-2022-23-fiscal-year-ajk-income-tax-commissioner-asim-shoukat/>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Peace and stability in South Asia depend on resolving the Kashmir issue: 'AJK' president

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 26 September 2022

While speaking to a protestor crowd gathered outside the United Nations (UN) headquarters, New York, Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, the president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), said that the Kashmir issue is the longest-standing unresolved issue on the UN agenda and that finding a resolution to it is crucial to achieving peace in South Asia. While referring to the UNHRC's 2018 and 2019 findings on the human rights situation in Kashmir, he stated that these reports were adequate to awaken those who choose to remain silent while being aware of New Delhi's 'dubious' and 'destructive' role in the region. He said that it was high time that the international community should come forward to help stop the ongoing Indian 'atrocities' in 'occupied Kashmir' and play its proactive role to resolve the dispute once and for all. He voiced 'grave concern' over the massive troops' concentration in the region, adding that the political and human rights situation in Kashmir had 'deteriorated' to an alarming level after the Indian government took the 'unilateral decision' to revoke article 370 and 35-A of the Indian constitution

that had guaranteed special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

While denouncing the Indian government's 'repulsive' act of 'changing' the demographic character of the region, he said that under the guise of this unconstitutional move PM Modi's government had issued 'fake' domiciles to two million non-state subjects with a 'malicious' intent to alter the region's demography. He said that the people of 'occupied Kashmir' were fighting against the 900,000 Indian armies. He urged the UN and OIC to take serious note of these reprehensible activities and take measures so that these actions are halted. He also assured the protesters that he would continue his efforts to bring world attention to this issue and will travel to every nook and corner of the world to accomplish his goal. He appealed to the diaspora community to redouble their efforts and become a voice of their voiceless brethren in the 'occupied Kashmir' to help them realize their goal of 'freedom from the Indian occupation.' The chairman of, the World Forum for Peace and Justice, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai while addressing the gathering asked the UN that the application of international law should not be selective in resolving international conflicts. He warned the world powers that the status quo in Kashmir if left unchanged, will only result in a growing spiral of death and even greater regional instability.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Resize-of-F-26.jpg>

In response to the Indian Foreign Minister's UNGA address, Pasban e Hurriyat organized massive protests

Mahasib, 26 September 2022

A huge protest was organized under the aegis of Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir against Indian Foreign Minister Jaishankar's speech at the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). A large number of citizens, waving banners and black flags, marched on the main road of the 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) capital while chanting slogans of 'Boycott India.' While addressing the protest, chairman Pasban-e-Hurriyat Uzair Ahmed Ghazali said the Indian foreign minister was trying to educate the world about peace while his own country had been 'illegally occupying' Jammu and Kashmir for the last seventy-four years. He maintained that the 'Indian forces' had 'killed' thousands of 'innocent' civilians for raising their voices for the implementation of UN resolutions, adding that millions of citizens were 'compelled' to migrate while tens of thousands of Kashmiri citizens were injured by bullets, pellet guns and other violent attacks by the 'Indian forces.' He further claimed that thousands of citizens were 'abducted' from their homes by 'Indian forces,' killed and buried in anonymous graves, added, the address of the Indian foreign minister about peace at the UNGA was an insult to the prestigious platform, as the state he was representing, had been committing 'grave human rights

violations' in the 'occupied' territory for decades.

<http://mahasibb.mahasibb.com.pk/news.php?id=175>

Bilawal reiterates to the 'AJK' president that Pakistan continues to support the cause of Kashmir

Nawaiwaqt, 28 September 2022

Pakistan Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari during his meeting with the president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir'(AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry in New York said that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the United Nations (UN), and other international organizations should assist Kashmiris. Bilawal also promised 'AJK' president that Pakistan would make every effort to raise its support for the right of the Kashmiris to self-determination. He reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering moral, political, and diplomatic support for the Kashmiris' righteous and moral fight for 'freedom.' During the meeting, 'AJK' president stated that the international community should take the necessary action to resolve the Kashmir issue in light of the UN resolutions, and added that the foreign minister assured him during a conference that Pakistan would keep bringing attention to the plight of the Kashmiri people in all fora around the globe.

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/AJK/2022-09-28/page-1>

India is actively attempting to stoke tensions among Kashmiris: Ambassador Zamir Akram

UrduPoint, 29 September 2022

Zamir Akram, a former ambassador, and advisor to Pakistan's Strategic Plan Division, claimed that India is actively trying to 'sow discord' among Kashmiris; as a result, all Kashmiris should work together toward the referendum's agenda. He stressed that the policies of the Hindu 'extremist' government and the commitment of Hindutva to their ideology pose a 'threat' to regional stability. He alleged that India's secularism is being utilized to deceive the rest of the world, and added that since the beginning, India has been a nation dominated by 'extremist Hindutva.' He emphasized that the Pakistani government should launch a vigorous campaign on the political and diplomatic fronts to bring the Kashmir issue to the attention of the world.

He made these remarks during a webinar hosted by the Kashmir Policy Research Institute on the topic of the policies of the Modi government and their repercussions. Zamir Akram further claimed that India's actions on August 5 were in contravention of United Nations (UN) resolutions. He said that as per the UN resolutions, Kashmir is a disputed region, and added that the demography of Kashmir cannot be altered by any country. He

underlined that China is one of the parties to the Kashmir dispute, and it has adopted a 'fiery position' in response to India's 'unlawful action' on August 5. He emphasized that the world needs to know that the 'ongoing struggle for freedom' being waged by the Kashmiri people in 'occupied Kashmir' conforms with the UN charter, and an effective and vivacious voice must be raised worldwide to call attention to 'human rights abuses' and 'persecution' of Kashmiris by India in 'occupied Kashmir.'

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-3297019.html>

OIC Secretary General Hussain Ibrahim Taha meets with the president of 'AJK'

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 30 September 2022

Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry, the president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir,(AJK) and Hussain Ibrahim Taha, the secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), met in New York. During the meeting, the secretary general of the OIC stated that we support Kashmiris and should never stop advocating for a settlement to the Kashmir conflict and the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination. The 'AJK' president stated that Hussain Ibrahim Taha has worked for a resolution to the Kashmir issue and the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination ever since he assumed the position of Secretary General. Sultan Mehmood said that he has also invited me to every forum,

whether it is the OIC Foreign Ministers Conference in Islamabad or the Kashmir Contact Group. I am fully aware that effective efforts regarding 'occupied Kashmir' have been made in each forum, added that I have been given a wonderful opportunity to express and represent the views of millions of Kashmiris.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Resize-of-FRONT-PAGE-30.jpg>

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Disclaimer

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