

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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19 December - 25 December 2022

Khalsa Sarkar Tarbela
Diamer-Bhasha Dam
Gilgit-Baltistan
wheat subsidy POK
illegal land grab



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Political Developments

Indo-Pak war of attrition?

Pakistan Observer, 19 December 2022

India and Pakistan have recently engaged in rhetorical combat reminiscent of the verbally combative months that followed the 'annexation' of Kashmir by the Modi government in August 2019. The pandemic's devastations had, inadvertently, calmed both sides' bluster. The early 2021 truce near the line of control also contributed to a decrease in temperature. Now that things have suddenly flared up once more. The Indian foreign minister's anti-Pakistan statements at the UN Security Council last week, and his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto's response to the charges in a much more forceful manner, have set off a cycle of aggressive rebuttals and counter-statements. By equating Modi with RSS and the Nazis, the Pakistani foreign minister has sparked protests in different Indian cities. In response, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has decided to take out rallies to support its Chairman. While considering that there has been no new border conflict or terrorism incident, there is no compelling reason for the two countries to be at diplomatic loggerheads. The new government in Pakistan, just like the old ones, started by offering India meaningful dialogue on Kashmir followed by the opening up of bilateral trade. With the Indian general elections still a year and a half away, the BJP

government, too, should have no cause to double down on anti-Pakistan rhetoric this far in advance. It appears that the Indian government has decided to press Pakistan when the latter is vulnerable on several fronts. The economy is severely short of dollar inflows, putting into question the capacity to pay for imports and retire foreign debt. The reconstruction after the human and economic toll from the recent devastating floods is yet to commence.

The terrorism threat is also raising its head again. It is also clear that the year 2022 did not go well for the BJP government's long-running plans to diplomatically isolate Pakistan. Despite the previous Pakistani government's fallout with the US, the new government was able to resurrect the US-Pakistan bilateral relationship. When the massive floods struck Pakistan in August, the US was the biggest donor by far in providing relief grants. Thanks to American and European cooperation, Pakistan was able to get off the FATF's grey list a few months ago. In addition, if the planned donor's conference under the UN is held soon to help Pakistan deal with flood-related reconstruction costs, it will signal that Pakistan is not alone on the world stage. In this context, instead of trying to corner Pakistan, India should find ways to cooperate on issues of mutual interest, including security. The BJP government has long been playing the game of distracting from internal issues by targeting Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's strategy needs to be more than just showing India the mirror on the world stage. It should be focused on a hard-nosed analysis of internal and external threats and then finding ways to mitigate them by seeking less confrontational ways.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40215285/indo-pak-war-of-attrition>

'AJK' PM accuses Centre of trying to buy MLAs

The Express Tribune, 19 December 2022

The Prime Minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Tanveer Ilyas accused the PML-N-led federal government of trying to buy lawmakers of the region to overthrow its PTI regime, claiming that the center had sent briefcases full of cash to Muzaffarabad for this purpose. Ilyas maintained that the Centre was engaged in efforts to topple the PTI government in 'AJK.' He warned that if this 'dirty tactic' went on, the residents of the region would take to the streets. He further said political stability was imperative for 'AJK' and briefcases full of cash would dent the Kashmir cause. He noted that Pakistan was at war across the Line of Control, maintaining that using these tactics would only increase conflict and political turmoil in 'AJK.' He stressed that if the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) changes the government of 'AJK' at the Centre's behest, we will be on the streets.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2391750/ajk-pm-accuses-centre-of-trying-to-buy-mlas>

Bilawal exposed India's support for terrorism: Farooq Naek

The Nation, 20 December 2022

The chairman of the senate standing committee on foreign affairs senator Farooq H Naek said that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had 'exposed' India's support for terrorism. By effectively highlighting the hitherto unresolved issue of 'India Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) and mincing no words in loudly recalling Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as 'The Butcher of Gujarat' at the United Nation Security Council (UNSC), he claimed that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has done remarkably well in not only bringing Kashmir issue in the global limelight but also rightly exposing to the world the true 'fascist face' of India. Naek also commended Bilawal on reminding the UNSC to fulfill its obligation vis-à-vis an agenda item that had been left unaddressed and that is the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. He said that Bilawal had dexterously used the UNSC forum to implement its resolutions on the Kashmir issue and prove that multilateralism can succeed.

He claimed that Bilawal made use of the UN platform to show to the world that India, the so-called biggest democracy and a secular state, was an 'extremist RSS-led mobocracy' following an intolerant and 'terror-driven' ultra-nationalistic Hindutva

philosophy that considered the whole of India as an essentially Hindu state that had no room for religious and ethnic minorities and progressive elements. He also demanded the immediate release of Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik and all other Kashmiri leaders and people incarcerated on trumped-up charges. He said Yasin Malik and other political prisoners were victims of the draconian Indian Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA), black law that aimed at targeting political opponents. He said the historic struggle being waged by valiant people of the 'IIOJK' for their rights is indigenous and cannot be hampered by the draconian strong-arm tactics of the Modi-led Indian Government.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/20-Dec-2022/bilawal-exposed-india-s-support-for-terrorism-farooq-naek>

Kashmiris await the world's attention on International Human Solidarity Day

Pakistan Observer, 21 December 2022

The world is celebrating International Human Solidarity Day, with the main objective to remind governments to respect their commitments to international agreements, however, Kashmiris continue to wait for the exercise of their right to self-determination for the past seven decades. A report released by Kashmir Media Service on the day said that inspired by Adolf Hitler, fascist Indian occupation forces have martyred

around 4.5 lac Muslims in 'India illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) over the 75 Years. The report urged the world community to raise voices for the voiceless people of 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir. The report mentioned that celebrating the day won't leave an impact on the ground unless international campaigners for justice and peace stand with the subjugated people of Kashmir and Palestine whose political rights have been snatched by India and Israel as 'occupier forces.'

<https://pakobserver.net/kashmiris-await-worlds-attention-on-intl-human-solidarity-day/>

Criticality of resolution of Kashmir dispute

Pakistan Observer, 23 December 2022

The conflict over Kashmir between India and Pakistan is more than seven decades old with both neighboring countries bearing heavy costs of this long unresolved issue. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has the noble responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, being authorized to convene at any time, whenever there is a threat to peace. All member states are obligated under the United Nations Charter to abide by the Security Council's pronouncements. Pakistan joined the United Nations in September 1947 committing itself to the objective of maintaining global peace. Pakistan has made significant contributions as a member of the Security Council and has a decades'

long history with the UN being one of the largest contributors of troops and police in peacekeeping initiatives where over 200,000 personnel have honorably served in 46 UN Missions across almost all the continents. Similarly, Pakistan's contribution to the war against terrorism is unparalleled having offered maximum facilitation and support to the international community to fight this scourge.

The Kashmir issue has been the epicenter of Pakistan's diplomacy, since the very first day of its existence. The United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan on 5 January 1949 resolved that the question of accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) to India or Pakistan would be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite. Pakistan has long been advocating the resolution of the Kashmir dispute based on Resolutions adopted by the Security Council and supported its view at all forums. On the contrary, however, India has been shying away from impartial plebiscites to be conducted under the patronage of the United Nations. Not only has India continuously violated the terms of the UNSC resolution but in August 2019, it decided to do away with article 370 of its constitution. Abolishment of article 370 was in contravention of the UN resolution being prejudicial to the rights of the people of J&K and Pakistan.

On the part of India, this was a gross violation of human rights. Pakistan has been making continuous efforts to apprise the world about the draconian laws and approach adopted by India in 'illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IOJK) and reminding the United Nations of its responsibility to speak out against these violations, drawing attention to UNSCR 38, which calls upon respective parties, i.e., Pakistan and India, 'to inform the Council immediately of any material change in the situation which occurs or appears to either of them to be about to occur while the matter is under consideration by the Council, and consult with the Council thereon'. Pakistan's foreign minister explained to the world that his country was a victim of terrorism when his mother was assassinated while present Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the then Chief Minister of Punjab, lost his minister for internal affairs, in terrorist attacks. Undoubtedly, Pakistan being a frontline ally suffered economic losses to the tune of over US\$ 150 billion since 9/11 and the death of eighty thousand civilians and law enforcement personnel. He also highlighted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'involvement' in 'killing Muslims' in Gujarat when he was Chief Minister and his 'role' in the 'killings' of innocent civilians in Kashmir. The UN should understand the sensitivity and importance of the unresolved issue of Kashmir. The mere holding of meetings

and passing of resolutions are not serving any purpose for which there is a need to come up with some solid solutions. Global peace is subject to the peaceful resolution of J&K otherwise, just one wrong move can be detrimental to international peace efforts.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40216199/criticality-of-resolution-of-kashmir-dispute>

Modi regime committing genocide of Muslims of India, 'IIOJK:' Mushaal

Pakistan Observer, 23 December 2022

The chairperson of the peace and culture organization Mushaal Hussein Mullick raised the 'alarm' that the 'fascist' Narendra Modi government was involved in 'committing genocide' of Muslims of India and 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK), as 'brutal soldiers' were not only given killing license but the assassination of Kashmiri people was incentivized as well. She said that Indian forces were given complete immunity and murderous soldiers got promotions and rewards in the 'occupied' valley for 'ruthlessly killing' innocent Kashmiris. Mushaal lamented that when International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and the Prevention of this Crime was being observed across the world, Muslims in India and 'IIOJK' were on the brink of 'genocide,' as Hindutva leaders were openly calling for the mass killing of

Muslims. She claimed that following India's 5 August 2019 'illegal action', fears of 'genocide' in 'IIOJK' have increased manifold.

<https://pakobserver.net/modi-regime-committing-genocide-of-muslims-of-india-iiojk-mushaal/>

Economic Developments

'AJK' PM ensures the rehabilitation of 300 migrant families and the construction of the Kashmir migrant colony

Mahasib, 19 December 2022

The Prime Minister of 'Azad Kashmir', Tanveer Ilyas Khan during his visit to Lakodir Kashmir Colony in Lahore said that it was distressing to watch the condition of Kashmiri refugee families residing in the colony. The increase in the monthly sustenance payment for refugees and resettlement, he claimed, were not priorities for the previous governments. He declared that he would pay his expenses to construct homes for the poorest refugee families while underlining his government's commitment to addressing the issues faced by the immigrant population. He stated that a thorough plan would be developed soon in consultation with the ministry of finance and legislators running for seats on migrant constituencies for 300 refugee families and the rehabilitation of homeless refugees.

<http://mahasib.com.pk/epaper/news.php?id=1359>

Briefing on Diamer-Bhasha Dam sought: Senate panel discusses sedimentation at Tarbela Dam

Business Recorder, 20 December 2022

The Senate Standing Committee on Water Resources sought a detailed briefing on Diamer Bhasha Dam (DBD) to view the measures adopted to stop sitting in the water reservoir. The committee chaired by senator Syed Muhammad Sabir Shah discussed sedimentation at Tarbela Dam and measures taken to address it and plot allocation to victims of Tarbela Dam and encroachment. Discussing sedimentation at Tarbela Dam and measures taken to address it, members were of the view that while looking at ways to de-silt the dam, measures must be taken to allow sediment flow to a certain degree since this ensures land fertility. The ministry was directed to formulate a report that would outline long- and short-term measures to deal with the issue. A detailed briefing on DBD is too made in the next meeting as well. The committee was also of the view that mistakes of Tarbela Dam should be avoided in DBD.

While reviewing details of plot allocation to victims of the Tarbela Dam Commission, the committee was informed that the number of victims that have been compensated is 1,744. 450 victims filed writ petitions before Peshawar High Court (PHC) Abbottabad Bench for allotment of alternate agricultural land and enhancement of compensation against

the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), the federal government, the government of Punjab and Sindh. Based on the information provided by 450 victims, only one victim was found eligible for allotment of alternate agricultural land as per eligibility criteria of the federal government policy of 1967-68. Since the case is in court and is sub judice, the committee stressed the need for the perspective of both parties emphasizing an out-of-court settlement.

While discussing unauthorized occupancy of allotted land to victims of the Tarbela Dam in Punjab and Sindh, WAPDA was of the view that no such information regarding this issue was available with it as it is the domain of the provincial governments. The committee was informed that funding for water sector projects is meager due to which projects worth 1 trillion were delayed in the past. The officials of the Ministry of Water Resources were of the view that with the current pace of funding, water sector projects will be completed in 15-20 years adding that the ministry has to fix financial responsibility on its attached organization. The officials also supported an increase in water charges on the justification that if prices of fertilizers have increased then why not raised water charges?

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40215455/briefing-on-diamer-bhasha-dam-sought-senate-panel-discusses-sedimentation-at-tarbela-dam>

GB CS calls on Federal Secretary Finance, discusses wheat subsidy

The Nation, 21 December 2022

The Chief Secretary of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Muhyuddin Ahmed Wani called on the special secretary finance division Mr. Awais Manzur Sumra to discuss the wheat subsidy of GB and the creation of posts for the Special Protection Unit (SPU) and Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) GB. While the finance division agreed to work out a solution for resolving the prevailing wheat issue of GB, the creation of posts for SPU/CTD has sought some clarifications from the Home Department of GB.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/21-Dec-2022/gb-cs-calls-on-federal-secretary-finance-discusses-wheat-subsidy>

Locals of Minawar accuse Gilgit administration of land grabbing, protest

Pamir Times, 21 December 2022

Locals of Gilgit city's Minawar area protested and accused the Gilgit sub-division administration of illegal land-grabbing. The movement of the administration's officials and equipment was halted by the protesters' blockade of a road. Youth in the area and prominent political figures have sworn to fight against what they perceive to be an 'illegal land grab' attempt by the Gilgit Baltistan (GB) administration. Though a large contingent of police and paramilitary

forces, Ranger, FC, and GB Scouts, was present during the protest, however, due to stiff resistance from the protesters, the official could not move forward. The protesters said that the administration is involved in snatching the locals' land by declaring them 'Khalsa Sarkar', a term used to identify lands that the government says belongs to the state. Locals across GB have been opposing the Khalsa Sarkar law, reminiscent of times when the region was ruled by the Dogra and Sikh invaders and occupiers. Locals believe that the law is being used to deprive them of their common ancestral properties.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2022/12/21/locals-of-minawar-accuse-gilgit-administration-of-land-grabbing-protest/>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Pasban Hurriyat has begun preparations for a countrywide celebration of Right to Self-Determination Day on January 5 to speak against Indian 'war crimes' in 'IIOJK'

Mahasib, 21 December 2022

To raise awareness of Indian 'war crimes' in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) and to decide the state's political future, Pasban Hurriyat has begun preparations for a Right to Self-Determination Day rally, which will be observed on January 5, 2023. He claimed that to resolve the Kashmir dispute following the right to self-

determination, the people will demand that the United Nations (UN) stop all of the Indian government's 'illegal activities' in 'occupied Kashmir,' which have been ongoing since August 5, 2019. Uzair Ahmed Ghazali, the vice chairman of the International Forum for Justice, Mushtaq Salam, leader of the Pakistan People Party (PPP), Vice Chairman of the Pasban Hurriyat Usman Ali Hashim, among others were also present during the press meeting. They claimed that India is perpetrating the worst 'war crimes' against innocent civilians in 'occupied' Kashmir, and added that the imperialist acts of August 5, 2019, were dictated by the millions of Indian 'terrorist's army.' Uzair claimed that after ruthlessly enforcing inhumane black laws that turned the entire state into a jail, the defense minister and army generals of India are now openly threatening to attack 'Azad Kashmir.'

Uzair further claimed that by downplaying the significance of the Kashmir dispute, India is making desperate attempts and conspiracies to banish it from the United Nations platform. He asserted that it is urgently necessary to build a potent public resistance movement to counteract Indian activities and make the world community aware of the significance and sensitivity of the Jammu and Kashmir issue. He urged the people of 'AJK' in general and the people of Muzaffarabad Division, in particular, to participate in the protest, adding that on January 5, 2023, every citizen should

speak up against Indian 'war crimes' and demand the UN decide the political future of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He asked people to gather in huge numbers at Burhan Wani Shaheed Chowk and demand that Kashmiris be granted the right to self-determination. Given the seriousness of the situation in 'Occupied Kashmir,' he asserted, a popular vote should be held to reject Indian 'military occupation,' adding that it should resemble a vote against Indian 'military occupation.' All parliamentary parties will take part in their appeal for support in freeing Jammu and Kashmir from India's 'barbaric rule,' including the opposition, the Pasban Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, ulema, members of civil society, and young people. To preserve the dignity and sense of identity of the 'occupied state,' they should take part in the demonstration and the nationwide vote against India on January 5, Uzair claimed.

<http://mahasib.com.pk/epaper/news.php?id=1384>

'AJK' PM meets the president of Pakistan

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 21 December 2022

The president of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi meet with the Prime Minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Tanveer Ilyas Khan. The Kashmir issue and other crucial problems were discussed in depth during the two leaders' conversations. While paying homage to the Kashmiri martyrs, Tanveer Ilyas

welcomed the President and expressed his happiness at Islamabad's reiteration of diplomatic, political, and moral support for Kashmiris, saying that Kashmiris' final destination is Pakistan and that he would keep working toward this objective. He asserted that the government in base camp is making effort to assist its Kashmiri brothers and sisters in 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir. Dr. Alvi appreciated the 'AJK' government for successfully conducting the local body elections and ensuring Pakistan's full moral and diplomatic support to the people of 'occupied' Kashmir.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Resize-of-front-page-4.jpg>

Jl Leaders and Syed Ali Geelani's three properties have been sealed by the Modi government in 'Occupied Kashmir'

Mahasib, 21 December 2022

Indian officials in 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir have sealed three Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) properties, including a 17 Marlas, two-story house registered in the name of deceased Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Gilani in Srinagar. On December 19, the District Magistrate of Srinagar issued an order sealing these three properties, which are either owned by JI or Ali Shah Gilani. This was done using the draconian UAPA law. It is significant to note that Hurriyat leaders, particularly the JI leaders of 'Indian Occupied Kashmir' (IOK), have already had their property seized by the 'occupation' authorities

for their engagement in the Kashmiris' fight for the right to self-determination.

<http://mahasib.com.pk/epaper/news.php?id=1385>

Bringing the Kashmir issue to the attention of the world has been one of my main priorities: 'AJK' President

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 23 December 2022

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has stated that bringing the world's attention to the Kashmir issue has been one of his major priorities since taking office. While referring to the promise he had made to the people, he stated that two of them, the international spotlighting of the Kashmir issue and the conduct of local body elections in 'Azad Kashmir' have been kept. He claimed that he had achieved significant success by bringing attention to the situation of the Kashmiris during his tours to the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), the Middle East, and Europe. The need for an immediate resolution of the Kashmir issue, he claimed, has now been recognized by the entire world. He said that Kashmiris living abroad, especially those in the UK, who have always supported me in raising the Kashmir dispute at international forums, deserve all the credit for this developing worldwide consciousness on the Kashmir issue.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Resize-of-front-page-5.jpg>

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Disclaimer

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