

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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Gilgit-Baltistan
economic package
Dasu
Hydropower
POK Project
hydel industry
cottage tourism
Sui
pollution
gas
Motorway



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

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Political Developments

Pasban-e-Hurriyat demands the immediate release of Yaseen Malik

Daily Times, May 16, 2022

The chairman of Pasban-e-Hurriyat, Uzair Ahmad Ghazali said that the 'fake cases and partial court proceedings' against Muhammad Yasin Malik by the government of India, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) were the "worst example of barbarism" against Kashmiri leadership. He claimed that Yasin Malik was arrested by the Indian government for 'fearlessly supporting the freedom, self-determination and justice for the Kashmiri people', adding that PM Narendra Modi's government wanted to execute him based on 'baseless allegations.' He said that India had executed Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders Maqbool Butt and Afzal Guru in 'fake cases', Mohammad Ashraf Khan was 'martyred in the jail' and the 'body' of Syed Ali Shah Gilani was also taken out of the house during 'illegal detention.' Ghazali urged the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), international human rights organizations, Amnesty International and Asia Watch to put pressure on India to save the life of Muhammad Yasin Malik, added that they should take 'immediate steps' for the release of Yasin Malik and other Kashmiri prisoners.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/935846/pasban-e-hurriyat-demands-immediate-release-of-yaseen-malik/>

Bilawal to discuss Kashmir issue with Blinken: Hina Rabbani

The Nation, May 18, 2022

Pakistan minister of state for foreign affairs Hina Rabbani Khar said that foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will discuss regional matters and the 'Kashmir issue' among other subjects with Antony Blinken. While speaking to the journalists Khar said Pakistan wanted close ties with the United States (US) and added that Bilawal will take up all the issues of mutual interest with Blinken. Pakistan's Foreign minister is on a visit to the US to participate in a ministerial meeting on global food security.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/05/18/bilawal-to-discuss-kashmir-issue-with-blinken-hinal>

PM of AJK calls for nationwide protests against Yasin Malik's 'unilateral trial' by India's 'Kangaroo court'

Daily Parliament Times, May 18, 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" (AJK), Sardar Tanveer Ilyas has announced to hold state-wide protests against the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chairman Muhammad Yasin Malik's 'unilateral trial by a kangaroo court in India.' While addressing a press conference at the PM House, Tanveer Ilyas said that the JKLF chief was being punished for his unprecedented role in Kashmiris' ongoing freedom struggle, and added that the denial of a fair trial to Malik was an obvious manifestation of the 'falling justice' system in India that has miserably failed to deliver justice to Kashmiris.

While referring to ‘judicial bias’ against Kashmiris, the PM said that following the abrogation of article 370, Kashmiri political leaders have faced escalating prejudice in India where BJP has used its ‘Kangaroo courts’ as an effective tool to ‘suppress democratic dissent in the region. While citing ‘India’s long history of persecuting Kashmiri leaders’, the PM said that there is a fear that the Indian judiciary might repeat the ‘dreadful history’ to satisfy the so-called collective conscience of the Indian society by eliminating Mr Malik on ‘fake and frivolous charges’, adding that no good can be expected from the Indian judiciary that works on ‘whims and fantasy’ of the ruling party. He ‘warned’ the Indian government to desist from any such move and said that any attempt to penalize and persecute the JKLF chairman would have serious consequences for regional security, peace and stability.

While highlighting Malik’s contribution to the freedom struggle, he said, that ‘India should never take Kashmiris for granted; Malik is not an ordinary citizen, he is a national hero who enjoys a massive followership on both sides of the line of control.’ While urging the world community to take notice of the matter, Tanveer Ilyas said that the United Nations (UN), P5 countries and other relevant bodies must play their due role to stop the victimization of the JKLF chief and other Hurriyat leaders who have also been ‘implicated in fake cases.’

He further said that given the Indian judiciary’s ‘bias against Kashmiri Muslims, Malik’s case should be heard by an independent and impartial

judicial commission, adding that there is no rule of law in the ‘occupied Kashmir’, emphasized that Yasin Malik has been suffering from multiple acute ailments for many years while imprisoned in Indian jails. While responding to a question, he said, Imran Khan has had the honour and privilege to raise the issue of Kashmir at every international forum, added that Imran Khan had categorically refused to enter into any kind of dialogue with India or start trade unless the BJP government revokes all the actions it had taken since 2019.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/05/18/pm-ajk-calls-for-nation-wide-protests-against-maliks-unilateral-trial-by-indias-kangaroo-court/>

OIC-IPHRC to discuss Kashmir, Palestine, Islamophobia Issues

The Nation, May 19, 2022

The 19th regular session of the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) will be held from May 22-26 at the OIC general secretariat headquarters, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The scheduled meeting will be attended by all OIC member and observer states, including their national human rights institutions, experts from international and regional organizations, and senior officials of the OIC and media representatives. The IPHRC is anticipated to hold ‘detailed discussions on all issues on its agenda, including the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in the OIC member states, the human rights violations in Palestine, and ‘Indian

Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).’

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/05/19/oic-iphrc-to-discuss-kashmir-palestine-islamophobia-issues/>

Indian court convicts Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik in ‘fictitious terrorism case’

The Express Tribune, May 20, 2022

Pakistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs office in a statement said that a demarche has been handed over to Indian Charge d’ Affaires conveying Pakistan’s ‘strong condemnation’ on the framing of ‘fabricated charges’ against Yasin Malik, currently imprisoned at Tihar jail. The Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson said that in a ‘bid to suppress’ the voice of the ‘indigenous Kashmiri’ leadership, the Indian government had resorted to implicating them in ‘fictitious and motivated cases,’ added that neither the ‘malicious Indian tactics’ of conjuring up ‘false charges’ against Kashmiri leadership nor the environment of ‘persecution, repression and intimidation’ could quash the ‘resolute struggle’ of the Kashmiris. The FO statement further said that the Indian side was also conveyed Pakistan’s ‘deep concern’ over Malik’s imprisonment in Tihar Jail since 2019 under ‘inhuman conditions’, added that the ‘brutal treatment’ meted out to him despite his ‘chronic ailments’ and denial of ‘decent health care facilities had resulted in steep decline in his health.’

The FO statement further said that the Indian side was ‘advised to prevail upon his government’ that rather than keeping the Kashmiri leadership under

an ‘unlawful hostage and denying them their fundamental human rights’, it must halt its state-sponsored terrorism IIOJK’, release all ‘political prisoners’ imprisoned on ‘trumped-up charges, stop human rights violations,’ lift the ‘inhuman military siege’ and let the people of ‘IIOJK exercise their right to self-determination’ according to the relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2357350/indian-court-convicts-kashmiri-leader-yasin-malik-in-fictitious-terrorism-case>

APHC- ‘AJK’ discusses ‘IIOJK’s deteriorating situation

Pakistan Observer, May 20, 2022

All Parties Hurriyat Conference ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (APHC-AJK) chapter convener Mohammad Farooq Rehmani chaired a seminar in Islamabad to discuss the ‘deteriorating situation’ in ‘Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir’ (IIOJK). The seminar was attended by ‘all the groups of the freedom movement’ and the Hurriyat conference to ‘forge unity in their ranks and devise methods to shape their unity’ in a better and organised form for the right to self-determination. During the event, Farooq Rahmani said that the unity of the Hurriyat conference is very significant to ‘frustrate Indian designs’ of curbing the voices of the Kashmiri people. The participants also held special prayers to pay tributes to ‘Shaheed’ Junaid Sehrai on his 2nd ‘martyrdom anniversary.’

<https://pakobserver.net/aphc-ajk-discusses-iiojks-deteriorating-situation/>

Economic Developments

Construction of relocated KKH-02 commenced

Pakistan Observer, May 17, 2022

The construction of the second phase of the relocated Karakoram Highway (KKH-02) under the Dasu Hydropower Project (DHPP) has started. Anwar-ul-Haque, general manager and project director of DHPP inaugurated the work activity in the presence of the senior officers of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), consultants and Chinese contractors. The construction work shall mainly include rock excavation, subgrade preparation water-bound aggregate base course, asphaltic base course, asphalt concrete wearing course, bridges and other structures. It has been noted that the proposed Dasu reservoir will be extended from the Dasu dam site, located about seven kilometres north of Dasu bridge to the lower end of Diamer Bhasha dam proposed about 74 km further north. The relocated KKH has been divided into two phases i.e. KKH-01 (Part-I) and KKH-02 (Part-II). The first phase is comprised of 25.200 km of relocated KKH plus a link road of 3.028 km, from the existing KKH at a lower level and joining with the relocated KKH at a higher altitude. The total length of the relocated KKH will be 61.7 km approximately.

<https://pakobserver.net/construction-of-relocated-kkh-02-commenced/>

UN resident coordinator meets 'AJK' president

Business Recorder, May 18, 2022

A delegation led by the United Nations (UN) resident coordinator in Pakistan Julien Harneis meet with the president of "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" (AJK), Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry at Aiwan-e-Sadr Kashmir House. Sultan Mehmood said that the UN agencies which are working for the elimination of environmental pollution in "Azad Kashmir", should also provide their support and assistance in the development of the agricultural sector, added that "Azad Kashmir" has ample opportunities for agricultural development. He further said that along with crop production, north "Azad Kashmir" also has ample opportunities for raising vegetables, fruits and livestock. The meeting was also attended by Florence Rolle, representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Pakistan and other members of the team. Florence said that "Azad Kashmir" has better human development indicators than Pakistan's other provinces.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40173900/un-resident-coordinator-meets-ajk-president>

The beginning of a new era of development and prosperity in the region: 'AJK' Minister

UrduPoint, May 18, 2022

The "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" minister for Food and Mineral Resources Chaudhry Ali Shan Soni has said that a new era of development and

prosperity will begin in the region under the leadership of “Azad Kashmir” Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan. He said that under the vision of Tanveer Ilyas, we will increase the revenue of the state by promoting cottage tourism and hydel industry in “Azad Kashmir”, added that his government would formulate policies to solve the problems of the common man and ensure the implementation of proposed policies in every deprived constituency of “Azad Kashmir” according to the vision of chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-3133611.html>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Lasting peace in the world is not possible without a solution to Palestine and Kashmir issue: Pakistan Shia leader

Jasarat, May 16, 2022

Pakistan Shia leader (Quaid-e-Millat Jafari), Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi while speaking on the International Day of Peace has said that on the one hand peace day is being celebrated around the world but on the other hand unrest and chaos are being perpetuated by the powerful nation-states which according to him is an open contradiction and double standard. He said that the world powers will have to abandon their double standard, adding that lasting peace is not possible until the Kashmir issue in South Asia and Palestine issue in the Middle East were not resolved. Syed Ali said that since

the day ‘illegitimate, occupying Zionist state’ was established on May 16, 1948, the seeds of unrest were sown in the world, especially in the Middle East, now the world has to decide whether it is with the oppressor or the oppressed.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2022/05/16/without-a-solution-to-the-palestinian-and-kashmir-issue-lasting-peace-in-the-world-is-not-possible/>

We will support politicians if they fight the ‘enemy of Kashmir’ instead of each other: JI Leader

Jasarat, May 16, 2022

The head of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Sirajul-Haq while paying homage to ‘Shaheed’s Kashmir’ Syed Ali Shah Gilani said that while the people of Pakistan and Kashmir kept the independence movement of Kashmir alive, however, unfortunately, the rulers of Pakistan could not do any significant work till now. Sirajul-Haq was addressing the opening ceremony of the English translation of Syed Ali Gilani's autobiography Wular Kanaray (on the banks of Wular) in Islamabad. The event was attended by the former head of JI ‘Azad Kashmir’, Abdul Rashid Turabi, convener of Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, Ghulam Muhammad Safi, former minister of ‘Azad Kashmir’ Farzana Yaqub, among others. Sirajul-Haq further said that we pay homage to the people of ‘occupied Kashmir’ for giving their lives to keep the freedom movement alive, added that the rulers of Pakistan made various claims and kept talking about Tipu Sultan but like other rulers, they could not do anything for Kashmiris.

He stressed that even former Prime Minister Imran Khan could not do anything during the four years of his rule, and added that on August 5, 2019, Kashmir was badly wounded by India but Imran Khan could not do anything. He said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) have forgotten Kashmir in their big meetings, and added that if these parties take one step toward Kashmir, we will take two steps and move towards them. He warned that leaders in Pakistan need to realize Kashmir is suffering and instead of fighting with each other, Pakistani politicians should fight the enemy of Kashmir, fight against poverty and lawlessness and get our support. He said that Kashmir leader Syed Gilani used to say that we are Pakistanis, Pakistan is ours, today we declare we are Kashmiri, stressed that, inshallah we will get Kashmir. He further claimed that Syed Ali Gilani is the name of an ideology, struggle, freedom movement and so on, added that the English translation of his book will further help the world to know him and his struggle better. He further said that Syed was a lover of the Prophet, Pakistan, and Tehreek-e-Azadi Kashmir was his eternal love, added that all of his book's main theme was Tehreek-e-Azadi Kashmir and Kashmir valley's accession to Pakistan.

Siraj said that the 'Hindu leaders' were upset with the Syed Gilani's slogan; we are Pakistan and Pakistan is us, added that through this slogan, Gilani told the people of Pakistan that our relationship with you is related to Islam. He claimed

that though PM Modi and his predecessors thought that they would silence Gilani's voice by putting him in jail (added that he spent a third of his life in jail and for the last several years of his life, he remained under house arrest), even in his death, the fear of Ali Gilani haunted the rulers in India and he was buried in the despair of the night. He claimed that the 'Hindu rulers' will never succeed because Ali Gilani is present in the body of every Kashmiri today, added that man does not become great by just attaining a great position but a man becomes great by living for the/a purpose and Gilani is a great example of this.

During the event, the former head of JI 'Azad Kashmir', Abdul Rashid Turabi said that the message of Ali Gilani's books is Tehreek-e-Azadi and a complete accession to Pakistan, and added that in the past, people in Kashmir were under the influence of Sheikh Abdullah, who was pro-India, however, it was Syed Ali Gilani who started speaking in favour of Pakistan and became an obstacle for both India and its puppet rulers in Kashmir. He further said that the former president General Musharraf tried to pierce the independence movement but Syed Ali Gilani became the biggest voice of resistance and managed to stop the partition of Kashmir, adding that now another attempt was being made to change the status of Kashmiris by settling non-Kashmiri. Ghulam Muhammad Safi, convener of Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir said that Syed Ali Gilani wanted Kashmiris to join the talks (Musharraf's four-point formula)

as the main stakeholder rather than Musharraf's four-point formula, trade with India or anything else, but his focus was for Kashmiris' right to self-determination, added that Gilani even used to celebrate Eid when it was announced from Pakistan, thus shows his extreme of love for Pakistan.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2022/05/16/220516-1-20/>

Kashmiri people will never be left alone: PML-N leader

UrduPoint, May 18, 2022

Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) leader (retired captain) Safdar said that the Kashmiri people would not be left alone, and added that India will not be able to maintain its 'illegal occupation of occupied Kashmir' for long. He claimed that the hearts of Pakistanis and Kashmiris beat together, and added that the silence of human rights organizations and the United Nations on 'Indian terrorism' is beyond comprehension. He said that Nawaz Sharif highlighted the Kashmir issue all over the world due to which it has become a flashpoint today. He said that more than 45 billion has been reserved for the construction of a double road from Mansehra to Muzaffarabad, the foundation stone of which will be laid by the Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif.

He further said that Shahbaz Sharif wants to make 'Azad Kashmir' a model state, and added that a big economic package and practical steps for the construction, development and prosperity of 'Azad Kashmir' are under consideration. He said that Mansehra to Muzaffarabad Motorway is a big

development project for which PML-N is playing its role, and added that soon Sui gas will be provided to Muzaffarabad which will benefit thousands of Kashmiri people. He also said that there will be a PML-N government in 'Azad Kashmir' soon.

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-3133605.html>

Pakistan FM briefed US Congressman on 'Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir'

UrduPoint, May 20, 2022

Pakistan Foreign Minister (FO), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari during his virtual meeting with the United States (US) Congressman Adam Smith (chairman of US House Armed Services Committee), briefed him on the 'Indian illegal actions' of August 5, 2019, in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) and its continued 'atrocities' against the Kashmiri people. The foreign minister further drew Congressman's attention to the steps recently taken by India to redraw the constituencies in 'IIOJK' through an 'illegal delimitation process' to change the Muslim majority into a minority in the 'occupied territory.' While both the leaders further emphasized the importance of strengthening business-to-business ties between both countries, Pakistan FM maintained that the U.S. entrepreneurs had the opportunity to benefit from the immense economic potential offered by Pakistan's unique geography.

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/important-news/live-news-3137115.html>

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Compiled by
Mohd. Usman Bhatti

Edited By
Dr. Smruti S Pattanaik

Disclaimer

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MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

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

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

Website: www.idsa.in; Email: pokdigest@gmail.com