

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

Volume 4 | Issue 31

29 July - 04 August 2024

Awami Action Committee
Chipursan Hydro Project
China Pakistan Border Trade
POK Youm-i-Isthsal
Baltoro Glacier
Gilgit-Baltistan
Federal Board of Revenue



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

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Political Developments

Govt won't shy away from putting its resources at the Hurriyat's disposal: 'AJK' PM

Daily Parliament Times, 30 July 2024

The Prime Minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Chaudhry Anwarul Haq has said that the government of 'Azad Kashmir' would utilize all available resources to strengthen Kashmir cause and Kashmiris' ongoing freedom struggle against India. While addressing a press conference during his visit to the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) office, he said that the purpose of his visit to the amalgam's office was to congratulate the newly elected leadership of Hurriyat and express solidarity with our Kashmiri brethren. He assured the Hurriyat leadership that all the resources of the 'AJK' government were available for the freedom movement of Kashmir. The government won't shy away from putting its resources at the Hurriyat's disposal, he said. The PM also appreciated the APHC leadership for holding joint rallies with the people of Pakistan from Islamabad to Karachi and from Karachi to Lahore. The move, he said, would further cement the bond between the people of both regions.

Commenting on the recently concluded elections in India, he said that the BJP's Hindutva ideology received a serious setback during the parliamentary polls. The people of 'Occupied Kashmir' demonstrated the highest degree of valour and defeated Modi and his

proxy candidates in the parliament elections. The APHC convener, Ghulam Muhammad Safi, thanked the PM Haq for visiting the Hurriyat office. The APHC convener besides highlighting the plight of Kashmiris in the occupied Kashmir presented a charter of demand to the PM on behalf of the post 90s migrant community.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2024/07/30/govt-wont-shy-away-from-putting-its-resources-at-the-hurriyats-disposal-pm-ajk/>

Lawyer bodies in Gilgit-Baltistan condemn adding AAC leaders to Schedule 4 of the Anti-Terrorism Act

Pamir Times, 30 July 2024

A number of lawyer bodies, including Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Bar Council and several district Bar Associations have strongly condemned adding the leadership of Awami Action Committee (AAC) to Schedule 4 list of the Anti-Terrorism Act. Calling it a violation of Pakistan's constitution, the GB High Court Bar Association has demanded removing the AAC leaders, including Chairman Ehsan Ali Advocate, from the list and halting actions under the said law against residents of GB till resolution of the region's constitutional status. Gilgit Bar Association, and Hunza Bar Association, in separate press releases, have made the same demands, while asking the government and administration in GB to refrain from scuttling freedom of expression in the region. Lawyer bodies also plan to challenge the act in a court of law, said Ashfaq Advocate, if the political

leaders and trade union leaders were not removed from the Schedule 4 list.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2024/07/30/lawyer-bodies-in-gilgit-baltistan-condemn-adding-aac-leaders-to-schedule-4-of-the-anti-terrorism-act/>

India breaks all records of barbarism and brutality in Kashmir: 'AJK' President

Daily Parliament Times, 31 July 2024

The President of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that founding president of 'Azad Kashmir' Ghazi e Millat (community/nation warrior) Sardar Ibrahim Khan had played an important role in the liberation struggle that culminated successfully in the establishment of a revolutionary government in the liberated territory on 24 October 1947. While paying tributes to the former president on his death anniversary, Chaudhry said that Khan besides spearheading the Kashmir Liberation Movement represented Kashmiris at the United Nations and pleaded their case effectively before the international community.

While referring to various development and public welfare projects initiated at the time when he was prime minister, Sultan said that 'I have had the honour and privilege to work under the guidance of Ghazi e Millat for five years.' Chaudhry said that it was under his guidance and direction that a number of mega projects including Jagran Hydel power project were launched in the state

between 1996 and 2001 from which revenue worth billions of rupees was being generated today. Similarly, a Cadet College at Palandri, Women's college at Bagh and Kotli, roads and other public welfare projects were launched across the state, he added. He claimed that India has broken all records of barbarism and brutality in Kashmir and that the mission of Ghazi e Millat will be fulfilled in letter and spirit.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2024/07/30/president-ajk-says-founding-president-of-azad-kashmir-ghazi-e-millat-sardar-ibrahim-khan-had-played-an-important-role/>

Pakistan to observe Youm-i-Istehsal on Monday in show of solidarity with Kashmir

Dawn, 4 August 2024

The federal government has announced that Pakistan will observe Youm-i-Istehsal (Exploitation Day) on Monday, to mark the fifth anniversary of India revoking Kashmir's special autonomy and to show solidarity with Kashmiris. On 5 August, 2019, India's Narendra Modi-led government stripped the Muslim-majority territory of its special status by repealing Article 370 of the constitution, splitting the former state into two territories directly ruled by New Delhi. Through the revocation of the said article, people from the rest of India gained the right to acquire property in Indian-held Kashmir and settle there permanently. Kashmiris, as well as critics of India's Hindu nationalist-led government, saw the move as an attempt to dilute the

demographics of Muslim-majority Kashmir with Hindu settlers.

In response to the controversial move, the Government of Pakistan designated 5 August as Youm-e-Istehsal, starting in 2020. This day is now observed annually in Pakistan as a reaction to the status change. This year, discussions related to the commemoration of the day were held at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif. According to Radio Pakistan, the meeting was attended by federal ministers and senior government officials who briefed the PM about preparations. A joint main event of Pakistani and Kashmiri leadership has been approved for the day, with PM Shehbaz expected to visit Muzaffarabad on 5 August to show solidarity with Kashmiris, a post from PTV News said on the X platform.

The post added that the premier will give an ‘important policy statement’ on Youm-i-Istehsal, but did not provide details. Other plans for Youm-i-Istehsal include a special walk to mark the day, as well as ceremonies across all provinces, ‘Azad Kashmir’, and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). The PTV News post added that special broadcasts will be aired to commemorate the sacrifices of Kashmiris and highlight alleged human rights violations by India in the territory. Youm-i-Istehsal will highlight the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, violations of the fundamental rights of Kashmiris, and

India’s breach of promises, the PML-N said in a post on X.

Earlier this week, Pakistan called on the international community to pressure India to restore the special status of Indian-held Kashmir, end repression in the Valley, and foster conditions conducive to resolving the longstanding dispute threatening regional stability. The call was made during a briefing for Islamabad-based foreign diplomats at the Foreign Office on Friday, where Foreign Secretary Syrus Sajjad Qazi detailed the conditions in the Indian-held disputed territory and discussed the repercussions of India’s actions of August 2019, from the standpoints of international law, human rights, and peace and security.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1850039/pakistan-to-observe-youm-i-istehsal-on-monday-in-show-of-solidarity-with-kashmir>

Economic Developments

GB Forests – preserving an asset

Daily Times, 29 July 2024

At a time when Pakistan is under severe climate change threats, fresh afforestation and protecting existing forest covered area has become a challenge for the federal and provincial governments. With forests in many areas under extreme pressure due to mounting power prices and activities of timber mafia, the responsibility on the government departments to preserve our precious forests has increased manifold. Gilgit-

Baltistan (GB), a region of breathtaking beauty, is home to some of the most valuable forests being a treasure trove of biodiversity and source of livelihood for local communities. However, these precious resources are also under threats like deforestation, illegal logging and climate change.

Although the government has initiated numerous measures to protect these forests yet it needs to implement a strict mechanism of penalties and educate local communities to preserve these forests and valuable habitat in the region. According to Forest and Wildlife Department, GB region has total 249,205 hectare forest covered area with Diamer having the highest forest cover (71%) followed by Astore (12%) and Gilgit (10%). These three districts together contain 93% of the total forest area of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Therefore, the GB government headed by Chief Minister Haji Gulbar Khan is making every possible effort to protect these forests. It has established Forest, Wildlife and Environment Department, to manage region's forestry, wildlife and other resources through sustainable and integrated natural resource management. The department is also a center for biodiversity and eco-tourism while Conservation Committees have been constituted to effectively protect wildlife and forests besides necessary legislation to educate local people about forest conservation.

Secretary Forests, Parks and Wildlife, Zafar Waqar Taj has also mentioned to

different measures for forests conservation especially to raising a regular force. The region lacked a dedicated force to protect forests and wildlife. But, now we have started training cadets for this purpose. He informed that a batch of 50 graduate cadets of GB's new Forest and Wildlife Force has recently passed out at Police Training College in Gilgit. This marks a crucial step towards bolstering region's forest and wildlife protection capabilities.

Besides other efforts and seasonal plantation, a special initiative was also launched under the banner of Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Program in 2019 to plant 170 million plants across GB. Total PSDP allocations for forest component under this program was Rs 6,920 million with Rs 650 million for protected areas initiative and Rs. 359 million for wildlife protection. Although the government claims to achieve the target of planting 10.765 million plants under this program, many local people are skeptical about the post plantation protection of these trees. As the forests are fragmented and scattered, their management and conservation always remains a challenge. Then, the illegal logging and deforestation also continue to pose significant threats to the region's forests, with thousands of hectare forest cover area already lost during last 20 years.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1212520/gb-forests-preserving-an-asset/>

Chipursan Hydro Project: Inquiry or Audit?

Pamir Times, 30 July 2024

The Secretary Water and Power Department, Government of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) has ordered an inquiry into allegations of corruption, mismanagement and malpractices, resulting in cost overrun of 150 million Pak Rupees and significant delay in the completion of 1 MW Chipursan Hydro Power project (HPP). This is not a one-off project suffering from cost overrun and delays but almost all the infrastructure projects including hydro projects are known to end with similar fate. Publicly casting allegations of corruption and resorting to inquiry will unnerve and instill insecurity in the officials of the department and generally not considered a good practice. Instead, an external full spectrum, end to end audit of project life cycle should be conducted without reference to corruption.

Also, inquiry into the alleged corruption by a peer official from the same department, as suggested by the news item will be perceived as a farce exercise to camouflage the underlying shortcomings or any corrupt practice, if any. The Chief Minister and/or Chief Secretary are requested to commission, in public interest, a full spectrum, end to end, project lifecycle audit executed by competent third-party professionals, such as the Pakistan Engineering Council,

WAPDA, based on the following guidelines:

Prefeasibility Study

Data collected/ surveyed on topography, hydrology, geology and constraints/barriers faced during reconnaissance survey of the project area to assess the technical feasibility of the project.

Feasibility Report/Detailed Project Report

Detailed Surveys and investigation of the project area to assess the technical feasibility, financial viability and that maximum head is utilized. A number of existing HPP like Mayun HPP and Sumayer HPP have not utilized available head which is an injustice to a natural blessing. Utilization of higher heads will not only produce proportionally more power but employ Pelton turbines which offer significant advantages – simple construction, easy to maintain, no draft tube, no cavitation and above all it can work on low discharge.

Alignment with power supply plan /program (if any) for Hunza: Mode of Project Execution

Lump sum turnkey (LSTK), Design by employer and procurement and execution by contractor(s) or any other scheme

Bidding Documents

Thorough and detailed review and evaluation of bidding documents for Civil Works – Diversion Weir, Intake, Water Channel, Forebay,

Sedimentation Tanks, Surge Tanks, Powerhouse, Tail Race, Penstock Pipe and assess completeness, correctness with respect to specifications, design guidelines and application requirements and that competition, fairness, transparency and proportionality are ensured. Thorough and detailed review of bidding documents for Evaluation and management (E&M) Works – Turbine, Generator, Governing System, Measurement and Protective Devices, Switchgear, Power Evacuation, Synchronization System and assess completeness, correctness and that the bidding documents ensure competition, fairness, transparency and proportionality.

Thorough and detailed review of Prequalification Criteria and assess for effectiveness and adequacy. Thorough and detailed review of Bid(s) Evaluation report to assess if the prequalified contractors and suppliers complied substantially with the prequalification criteria. Detailed and thorough review and evaluation of submitted bids and technical proposal from the selected contractors and assess substantial compliance with bidding documents. Detailed and thorough review and evaluation of Contract agreements with contract awardees – civil works and E&M Works for completeness, correctness and effectiveness to ensure successful completion of the project and establish rights and obligations of contractor(s) and employer.

Detailed and thorough review of Baseline Project Schedule for the project from NTP/Work Order to the project close out and assess if all the activities, timeline for each activity and relationship(s) between activities are correct and reasonable. Detailed and thorough review of Individual project Schedule(s) submitted by contractors for Civil and E &M contractors and assess compliance with master baseline project schedule and vice versa. Detailed and thorough review and evaluation of construction drawings (IFC's-Issued for Construction) and calculation sheets for civil structures – diversion weir, water channel, forebay, powerhouse, tail race etc. and calculation sheet for turbine and generator selection and their drawings and assess if they comply with the specifications, standards and requirements stipulated in the contract agreement.

Assessment of actual contractor's capacity – human resources, equipment and machinery and financial against prequalification criteria.

Assess communication protocol between employer, contractor and consultant (if any).

Detailed and thorough review of As Built Project Schedule for all completed activities and interact with employer engineer(s), contractor engineer(s) and find out reasons for deviations against baseline schedule. Site Visit to inspect, measure and assess actual construction against contract agreement documents

and design drawings – diversion weir, water channel, forebay, penstock pipeline, powerhouse and tail race etc.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2024/07/30/chupursen-hydro-project-inquiry-or-audit/>

Protesters block China border over tax issue

Dawn, 1 August 2024

The protest over the implementation of the GB Chief Court's order, which restrains the collection of income tax, sales tax, and additional sales tax on imported items from China through the Khunjerab Pass, intensified, with protesters disrupting immigration operations and blocking the exit point to China from Pakistan through the Pass. Protesters threatened to block the Karakoram Highway (CPEC), the main entry and exit point at Khunjerab Top, and extend the protest to other areas of the region if their demands are not met. GB traders continued their protest sit-in outside the Sost Dry Port for the sixth consecutive day, suspending all operations at the port. They are protesting against the non-implementation of the Chief Court's order restraining the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and Pakistan Customs from collecting taxes on imported items from China through the Khunjerab Pass, among other demands. Meanwhile, small traders staged a protest sit-in outside the Pakistan Immigration office at Sost, suspending travel to China. As a result, thousands of foreign and local passengers were unable to travel to China through the

Khunjerab Pass. The protesters held banners inscribed with slogans against the GB collector of customs, chief collector north, and the member customs operation.

The protesters claimed that Pakistan Customs officials are reluctant to address the genuine concerns of local traders, forcing them to resort to agitation. Addressing the protest sit-in, GB Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Imran Ali said the FBR and customs officials have been illegally collecting taxes from the GP people on items imported from China through the Khunjerab Pass. He accused the officials of committing contempt of court and openly defying the court order by claiming that the taxes issue is not within the jurisdiction of the GB court. He demanded an inquiry against the custom officials who have exacerbated the situation and agitated the GB residents.

Mr Ali claimed that the GB government, opposition members, religious and civil society organisations in the region had supported the movement. Muhammad Iqbal, president of the GB Importers and Exporters Association, demanded that the federal government initiate an inquiry against the custom officials who denied the people's rights and refused to implement the GB top court's decision. He said if the FBR doesn't accept the GB court, GB assembly, and constitutional position on the region, then the GB people have the right to reject all taxes imposed by

FBR. He said that despite this, the GB people are still paying all taxes directly or indirectly.

Former GB assembly member and businessman Javed Hussain said trade between Pakistan and China through the Khunjerab Pass remained suspended for the last many months. Thousands of people became jobless, as there are no alternative options for earning. He demanded an inquiry against the GB customs officials. A large number of local people who travel to China on border passes issued by the GB government for trade purposes have also suffered since the beginning of this issue in April. Small trade organisations are also part of the protest movement. They appealed to the Pakistan army chief and prime minister to end the injustices against local people and demanded the resignation of the customs collector.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1849347/protesters-block-china-border-over-tax-issue>

Finance minister reiterates support for GB development

The Nation, 1 August 2024

Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb reiterated government's commitment to support development of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) for the overall economic growth. The minister was chairing a meeting of the Committee on the issues of GB, according to press release issued by finance ministry. Aurangzeb expressed his appreciation for the well-

thought-out proposals presented in the meeting and underscored the importance of reforming GB's administrative and fiscal frame-works. He emphasized that these reforms were vital for both the welfare of the local population and the stimulation of tourism.

According to the press release, the meeting commenced with a detailed briefing by the Chief Secretary, who outlined the issues faced by the GB government. Some of these issues were related to insufficient fund allocations and delays in Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) projects, which lead to employee related and other liabilities. The Chief Secretary advocated for solar power projects designed to address the region's growing energy requirements. He also proposed initiatives for the digitization of land records and the expansion of airports to enhance tourism potential. These proposals aim to modernize GB's infrastructure and capitalize on its natural beauty, further contributing to the region's economic development. Among others, the meeting was attended by Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Engineer Amir Muqam; Minister for Finance-GB, Muhammad Ismail; Minister for Agriculture-GB, Mohammad Anwar; Chief Secretary GB; Member WAPDA and other officials from relevant Ministries.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/01-Aug-2024/finance-minister-reiterates-support-for-gb-development>

GB rivers flood as heatwave melts glaciers

Dawn, 4 August 2024

After almost a week-long heatwave in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), several streams traversing through the mountainous region are experiencing flooding due to a rapid melting of glaciers, with many a road and public and private property swept away. The localities situated downstream of these rivulets are living in a state of uncertainty due to a rise in water level which officials attributed to the melting of glaciers due to persistent heatwaves in the region. A flash flood in the Beraldu River in Shiger caused by a melting Baltoro glacier eroded agricultural lands, trees, and a road linking the region with Testun village. The flood created panic in the area, prompting people to take measures to mitigate the damage. The Hunza River also flew in high flood on Saturday, putting the localities along its bank at risk. Locals said the water eroded agricultural land in Ghalpin, Passu, and Gojal while also causing damage to the Karakoram Highway near Passu. The flood also submerged agricultural land and transmission lines in Passu.

In the Danyore nullah, a flash flood damaged a water channel and Manga Road in addition to a channel providing water to the Danyore powerhouse. In Nomal, the flood in the Hunza River swept away the transmission lines of the 18MW Naltar hydropower station, disrupting the

electricity supply to Gilgit. The Naltar Valley was also flooded. Gilgit city remained without power on Tuesday and Wednesday, but authorities managed to restore it on Thursday evening. A mudflow in the Roundu area suspended traffic between Baltistan and other areas whereas a similar event near Baghardu blocked the Baltistan Highway. The traffic was later restored at this point. Shahzad Shigri, the director of GB Environmental Protection Agency, said the water level in rivers and nullahs across the region increased at an alarming level and attributed the phenomenon to climate change.

There are threats of Glacier Lakes Outburst Floods events and flash floods in the rivers till the end of August, as temperatures rise to a maximum level in this month, he said, calling the rapid melting of glaciers this summer unprecedented. The official quoted the data saying there was a 0.5 degrees Celsius rise in average temperature over the past 30 years. Secondly, the snowfall started very late last season, which exacerbated the situation. According to Mr Shigri, snowfall on the mountains in November and December stabilises ice as the snow gets ample time to convert into ice. The snowfall received in February and March remains unstable and does not convert into ice, he added.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1849999/gb-rivers-flood-as-heatwave-melts-glaciers>

GB traders file contempt plea against Customs

Dawn, 4 August 2024

Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) traders have filed a contempt of court petition against the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and Customs for not implementing the GB Chief Court's order, which stopped the two organisations from collecting taxes on Chinese imports through the Khunjerab Pass. The traders have also been holding a sit-in outside the Sost Dry Port for the past 10th consecutive day against the two revenue bodies for not addressing their genuine concerns. A divisional bench of the GB Chief Court, comprising Chief Judge Ali Baig and Justice Jahanzaib Khan, admitted the contempt petition on Saturday and ordered the respondents to appear in person on 8 August and submit their response.

The petition, filed by GB Importers and Exporters Association president Muhammad Iqbal, sought action against Customs Chief Collector (North) Seema Bukhari, Collector GB Ghulam Mustafa, Additional Collector GB Sajid Ali Baloch for their 'willful and deliberate' disobedience of the court's 19 July order. Last month, Justice Raja Shakeel Ahmed of the GB Chief Court stopped FBR and Customs from collecting income tax, sales tax and additional sales tax on goods imported from China through the Khunjerab Pass. The judge said GB was exempted from these taxes.

The decision was issued on a separate petition filed by the GB traders'

association challenging the collection of these taxes at the Sost Dry Port. However, traders claimed Customs refused to implement the order on grounds that the GB chief court had no jurisdiction on matters of federal taxes. The traders staged a sit-in outside the Sost Dry Port, suspending all trade activities since 24 July. Hundreds of traders, transporters, labourers, customs clearing agents, and political workers have participated in the sit-in. Since 29 July, small traders have been holding a sit-in outside the Pakistan Immigration Office in Sost due to which thousands of foreign and local passengers were unable to travel by road to the neighbouring country.

However, foreigners have now been allowed to travel, but local passengers and transporters have not crossed the border for five consecutive days till Saturday. The protesters have claimed that despite the court's order and a unanimous resolution passed by the GB Assembly, FBR and Customs officials were refusing to solve the issues of GB traders. They said that GB and the bordering Xinjiang province of China had traditional links. Meanwhile, the protest leaders have called Customs' actions a conspiracy against the most peaceful border and an effort to damage historical ties between Pakistan and China. They said the agitation created a bad image of the country abroad for which Customs officials were responsible. The protesters have threatened to expand their protest by blocking the Karakoram Highway and the CPEC

route and said they'd announce their future strategy after 8 August.

Deadlock between traders, officials

A delegation of GB traders, comprising Mr Iqbal, the importers and exporters association president, GB Chamber of Commerce president Imran Ali and senior businessman Iqbal Pathan, have met with top Customs officials in Islamabad to amicably resolve the issue. The first round of talks failed after the Customs member operation refused to implement the Chief Court's order, according to Mr Iqbal. While talking to Dawn, he alleged that the revenue body had no intention to solve the issues. Muhammad Shafi Zawar, the general secretary of GB Customs Clearing Agents Association, has told Dawn that the clearance of goods at Sost Dry Port has been suspended since April.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1849997/gb-traders-file-contempt-plea-against-customs>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

An essay writing competition about Kashmir's ties with Pakistan is announced on the occasion of Independence Day

Urdupoint, 29 July 2024

On the occasion of Pakistan's Independence Day, 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' University (AJK-U) has organized an essay contest on Kashmir. The competition's goal is to emphasize the emotional, cultural, and historical connections between Pakistan and Kashmir. The essay writing

competition is open to Jammu and Kashmiri students. 'What is Kashmir's relationship with Pakistan, la ilaha illa Allah hai' is the theme of this essay writing competition. Students from across the 'AJK' region are encouraged to participate in the competitions and win cash awards. Essays can be sent in by students until 7 August. It is said that youths have a platform to voice their opinions about Kashmir and Pakistan both in its historical and current context. The university website has additional relevant information.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/national-news/live-news-4100439.html>

'AJK' PM reaffirmed his commitment to pursuing Ghazi-e-Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan's aim of achieving freedom for Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 31 July 2024

Prime Minister 'Azad Kashmir', Chaudhry Anwarul Haq has reaffirmed his dedication to pursuing Ghazi-e-Millat (warrior) Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan's goal of securing Kashmir's independence and integrating it into Pakistan. While remembering Ibrahim Khan's on his death the anniversary, Haq claimed that the goal of Ghazi-e-Millat was to fulfil the ambitions of the Kashmiri Muslims by bringing the former state of Jammu and Kashmir out of the Dogra Maharaja's grasp and integrating it into Pakistan. He declared that until the completion of Pakistan and the freedom of the 'Indian occupied' region of Kashmir, the fight to realize this

cherished objective would go on. Until the last drop of blood, he declared, the brave people of Kashmir would fight for their freedom. He said that Ghazi-e-Millat saw many highs and lows during his life, which spanned from 1915 to 2003. He never wavered from his beliefs and stayed true to his convictions.

He claimed that Ghazi-e-Millat effectively led the campaign in spite of difficult circumstances, raising the banner of insurrection against Dogra tyranny. On 19 July 1947, when there was nowhere for Muslims to congregate, the late leader had the honor and luxury of hosting an important conference at his Srinagar home. This meeting adopted the historic resolution that aligns Kashmir's fate with Pakistan, he declared. Haq praised the people of 'Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IOJK) for their extraordinary sacrifices and struggle, saying that they had written a new chapter in the history of resistance against India's worst forms of oppression and tyranny. He claimed that Kashmiris have never surrendered their identity or rights and never would.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Resize-of-FRONT-PAGE-31.jpg>

GB CM and Force Commander Northern Areas will raise Flag at Khunjerab Zero Point on the Pakistan-China border on 14 August

Urdupoint, 31 July 2024

According to Gilgit Baltistan (GB) government spokesperson Faizullah

Faraq, CM Haji Gulbar Khan and Force Commander Northern Areas Major General Kashif Khalil will raise the Pakistan flag at Khunjarab Zero Point on the Pakistan-China border on 14 August. The spokesperson stated that landmarking is being done in order to identify the location of flag hoisting, but it is unfortunate that certain individuals are also spreading false information about it. According to the spokesman, some people are attempting to mislead people about this activity by spreading false and unfounded propaganda on social media.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/gilgit/national-news/live-news-4102265.html>

Protest demonstration against the outage of power in Gilgit

Dailyk2, 1 August 2024

The Shaheed-e-Millat Road in Gilgit was blocked by Majini Mohallah residents in protest against the electricity department's prolonged power outage. All traffic was prohibited, and anti-administration slogans were chanted. The protestors said that the chief minister and other powerful individuals currently have special lines from which electricity is supplied around-the-clock, but the common people, on the other hand, are in dire need of electricity, and the government and the Department of Electronics should put an end to this practice. Additionally, supply energy to everyone equally; protestors maintained, if not, protests will break out throughout Gilgit.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/24028>

From Social Media

Azhar Uddin @AzharUddinSays

29 July 2024

Gilgit Baltistan: Trader's community in Sost dry port (Pak-China Border in Gilgit Baltistan) are protesting against the illegal tax collection by the state of Pakistan. #GilgitBaltistan.

https://twitter.com/i/bookmarks?post_id=1817663377579372644

Roshan Din Diameri @Rohshan_Din

30 July 2024

A person is spoiling the environment of Gilgit-Baltistan. Take him or else the situation will be different. Legal trade and business were also ruined. Member of Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Nawaz Khan Naji took the customs officials with their hands.

Media's special broadcast from Soast Port. via #northmedia #gilgitbaltistan

https://twitter.com/i/bookmarks?post_id=1818206264922653005

Roshan Din Diameri @Rohshan_Din

1 August 2024

Gilgit-Baltistan Water and Power Dept needs a capable officer. Current ones have left the region in darkness, despite significant funds allocated for new power plants this year. Competence and accountability are essential for progress. #GilgitBaltistan #PowerCrisis

https://twitter.com/Rohshan_Din/status/1819300993257132370

WAJAHAT ALI @wajahatgilgiti

1 August 2024

Amjad Advocate: In spite of huge water reserves, there is 20 hours of load shedding in Gilgit-Baltistan which is unbearable. #gilgitbaltistan #loadshedding #sost #pak #china #trade #strike.

Video link:

https://twitter.com/i/bookmarks?post_id=1819011349239722260

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Disclaimer

PoK weekly News Digest is a collection of news reports and press releases published in various newspapers and local media related to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), referred to as 'Azad Kashmir' and 'Gilgit Baltistan' by the government of Pakistan. The news reports have been edited and abridged to provide clarity. MP-IDSA is not responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the news items.



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