# **News Digest**

'akistan Occupied Kashmir)

23 December - 29 December 2024





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## **Political Developments**

# 'AJK' coalition warns govt to fulfil promises or face consequences

Dawn, 25 December 2024

Amid plans to expand its network to the grassroots level, a civil society coalition leading the rights movement in 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) has warned authorities to fulfil their promises within the next six months, or face the consequences.

The warning was issued during a late Monday meeting of the Jammu Kashmir Joint Action Committee's (JKJAAC) core committee in the town of Chakswari in Mirpur district, where several other key decisions were also made.

"The JKJAAC... congratulates people of the state who played an unforgettable role in the recent movement, particularly during the long march on May 11 and the lockdown and entry point closure on Dec 5, leading to significant successes," it said.

It reminded the government that after negotiations with an official team on Dec 8, it had given a six-month timeline for the full implementation of the approved Charter of Demands in compliance with the Feb 4 notification and a written agreement.

"During this six-month period, subcommittees of the JKJAAC will be formed at the union council and ward levels in consultation with the core committee members from the concerned districts to enhance public mobilisation and organisation."

The meeting announced strict adherence to its code of conduct, barring members from participating in programmes organised by other groups or organisations as JKJAAC representatives, without prior approval.

Expressing serious concern over the delay in construction of the Rathoa-Haryam Bridge, the nonimplementation of reduced property transfer tax rates, frequent power outages and low voltage issues and the alleged failure to improve the supply and quality of wheat flour, the meeting warned the government to deliver on its promises or else the rulers would responsibility full consequences.

Acknowledging the trust and support of the region's residents and overseas Kashmiris, the JKJAAC assured them that future decisions would reflect their aspirations and would be implemented with their backing.

https://www.dawn.com/news/1880928/ajkcoalition-warns-govt-to-fulfil-promises-or-faceconsequences

# All set to celebrate Christmas by Christian community in 'AJK'

The Nation, 24 December 2024

In 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) all is set by the local Christian community to celebrate Christmas on Wednesday (25th of December) with full religious zeal and fervor, according to Christian

Pastor of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Chairman AJK' Christian Welfare Society. Addressing a gathering of local Christian community held at Mangla to give final touches to the preparations to the Christmas, celebrate Christian Pastor of 'Azad Kashmir' Chairman 'Azad Kashmir' Christian Welfare Society said that the religious festival will be celebrated by the Christian community with full traditional religious enthusiasm in 'AJK' including Mirpur district. He said that there was complete freedom including the minorities Christian following community harmony traditional communal minorities majority between and Jammu community in 'Azad Kashmir' to perform their religious rights and other traditional and cultural obligations like other parts of the country. The Pastor said resolved that because of the liberal approach of the government and the people of Pakistan and 'Azad Jammu Kashmir', the soil of motherland -Pakistan and 'AJK' are enriched with conducive environment for the minority communities where there was complete sovereignty and freedom to perform their religious rites and other due obligations.

Religious leader of the Christian community said that the minorities will bring about all of their potentials for the speedy progress, prosperity and uplift of the country and will leave no stone unturned to make the defense of the country stronger up to the required extent.

He said that the minority Christian community will not ever lag behind in giving any sacrifice to make the Kashmir freedom movement complete success. Since the minorities are bent upon to pay their due share for the achievement of Kashmiris legitimate right to self-determination, he added.

On this occasion, the participant Christian children and others performed the special service by singing the religious songs to open the preparations for celebrating Christmas besides their community across the world.

Participants also offered special prayers for the speedy progress and prosperity and security of the country and for the early success of the Kashmir freedom movement.

https://www.nation.com.pk/24-Dec-2024/all-set-to-celebrate-christmas-by-christian-community-in-ajk

#### Earthquake jolts KP and 'AJK'

The Nation, 24 December 2024

An earthquake measuring 5.2 on the richter scale jolted parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, including Peshawar Muzaffarabad. According to a private news channel, the National Seismic Islamabad Monitoring Centre in reported that the epicenter was in the border region between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, at a depth of 212 Tremors were felt in kilometers. Peshawar, North Waziristan, Lower Dir, Malakand and AJK's Neelum Valley, causing residents to evacuate buildings in alarm. Fortunately, no

casualties or property damage have been reported.

https://www.nation.com.pk/24-Dec-2024/earthquake-jolts-kp-and-ajk

## 'Azad Kashmir' PM vows to thwart India's malicious plans to fuel unrest in region

Dawn, 24 December 2024

'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq said India was orchestrating plans for terrorist acts in the liberated territory, alleging that it had funneled money to create chaos amid protests for rights.

He was speaking at a press conference, in the company of over a dozen cabinet members, in what marked his first formal media interaction since his government, two weeks earlier, conceded to protests organised by the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JKJAAC) — a coalition of civil society organisations — and withdrew a controversial ordinance on public gatherings.

Mr Haq dismissed the notion that 'AJK's' political system had weakened, maintaining that the decision to negotiate with protesters was solely the initiative of the political government and its prime minister. "Governments emerge stronger, not weaker, when they successfully navigate through crises," he said.

"If you manage to peacefully send your citizens back through negotiations, avoiding bloodshed that could have played into the enemy's hands, your parliamentary system becomes one hundred per cent stronger," Mr Haq said, adding that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his agencies, which were funding activities in 'AJK', sought to equate the oppression in 'occupied Kashmir' with the situation in 'Azad Kashmir'.

"But here, we have an alert prime minister and an alert cabinet. Everyone understands the global challenges and the objectives behind this protest. Even the protest leadership realised that matters were slipping out of their hands. It's easy to gather a crowd but dispersing it peacefully is a far more challenging task. Everyone played their role, and matters were resolved amicably," the 'AJK' prime minister said.

He vowed to prevent unrest in the region to thwart Modi's doctrine.

Mr Haq expressed gratitude for the youth and social media users who launched campaigns defending him, saying that "it's a positive sign that opposition arises when you clash with the status quo and fight dishonesty".

Expressing gratitude to the central leadership of the PML-N and PPP, Mr Haq said the government would pursue its mission of public welfare with greater vigour now that the political atmosphere in 'AJK' had cleared.

https://www.dawn.com/news/1880621/azadkashmir-pm-vows-to-thwart-indias-maliciousplans-to-fuel-unrest-in-region

# Strong, stable, prosperous Pakistan guarantor to success of 'Completion of Pakistan' movement: 'AJK' PM

Daily Parliament Times, 25 December 2024

'Azad Jammu Kashmir' Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that a strong, stable and prosperous Pakistan was guarantor for the success of the 'Takmeel e Pakistan' (completion of Pakistan) movement.

He expressed these views while addressing a meeting of the parliamentary Kashmir Committee held at the federal metropolis on Wednesday.

Presided over by the Kashmir Committee Chairman Rana Qasim Noon, the meeting was attended by members of the committee including the PM 'AJK' Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, President PPP 'AJK' chapter Chaudhry Yasin, and others, says an official handout issued by 'AJK' government Wednesday night.

The meeting discussed in detail the prevailing political and human rights situation in 'occupied Kashmir' and ongoing development projects in 'Azad Jammu Kashmir'.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Chudhary Anwar ul Haq said that the Kashmiris' struggle would continue till the ideology of accession to Pakistan is fully materialized. He said that the Kashmiri people's love with the state of Pakistan and its people stem from unbreakable bond of brotherhood, affinity and their deep

connection to its tradition, culture and history.

Referring to the ongoing development project in 'Azad Kashmir', the PM said that major development projects including the Mansehra-Muzaffarabad Motorway, construction of Legislative Assembly building, rehabilitation of the internally displaced people and the construction of the Rathua-Haryam Bridge would be completed within a stipulated timeframe.

He said that the coalition government have introduced major reforms in education, health, and other sectors. "Reforms being implemented in government sectors have started yielding positive results", the PM remarked.

The 'AJK' premier voiced his grave concern over the worsening human rights situation in 'Indian occupied Kashmir'.

He said that Indian forces have been involved in gross violations of basic human rights in 'occupied Jammu and Kashmir'.

"India has deprived Kashmiris of their fundamental rights of citizens", the PM Haq said, adding that United Nations must take strict notice of the war crimes being committed by the 'Indian occupation forces' against Kashmiri people and help resolve the lingering dispute in line with the UNSC resolutions.

Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq on the occasion thanked the federal government for providing a grand package for 'Azad Kashmir' which enabled his government to announce subsidy on electricity and flour prices.

The PM said that electricity was being provided to citizens at three rupees per unit, while flour is also available at subsidized prices.

Meanwhile, talking to the media shortly after the end of meeting, the KC Chairman Rana Qasim Noon said that important proposals were presented in vis a vis the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Terming Pakistan and Kashmir like two bodies with one soul, Mr. Noon said," Kashmir is the jugular vein of Pakistan".

He strongly condemned the India's relentless suppression and human rights violations in 'occupied Kashmir'.

He also voiced his concern over the Indian government's nefarious designs to alter the region's demography.

https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2024/12/25 /strong-stable-prosperous-pakistan-guarantor-tosuccess-of-completion-of-pakistan-movement-ajkpm/

# 'AJK' Assembly condemns US sanctions, reaffirms support for defense

The Nation, 27 December 2024

The 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution condemning the US sanctions on Pakistan, which was presented by former Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan.

The resolution criticized the US for its efforts to disrupt the regional power balance in favor of India and reaffirmed that Pakistan's missile program is purely defensive. Raja Farooq Haider accused the US of being influenced by Indian lobbying.

'AJK' Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq reiterated strong support for Pakistan's military and emphasized the critical role of missile technology and the nuclear program in ensuring national security. He urged for collective defense against foreign intervention and aggression.

The resolution also highlighted Pakistan's significant role in maintaining regional stability, stressing that any external interference would undermine this vital contribution.

https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Dec-2024/ajk-assembly-condemns-us-sanctions-reaffirms-support-for-defense

## Workshop on "AJK' and Pakistan: Intertwined Fate and Shared Challenges' held

The Nation, 27 December 2024

Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in collaboration with Youth Forum for Kashmir organised a one-day workshop titled "AJK and Pakistan; Intertwined Fate and Shared Challenges". This significant event brought together students from 'AJK', including representatives from the University of Kotli, Rawalakot and the University of Poonch who travelled to participate in the event.

The workshop aimed to provide a platform for understanding the perspectives of the younger generation from 'AJK'. Through three dedicated sessions, participants engaged in discussions on various topics, ranging from the history of Jammu and Kashmir to the complexities of the current geopolitical world order.

These deliberations sought to equip the youth with a deeper understanding of critical issues, reflecting their vital role in shaping the region's future. Nisar Khuhro calls on federal govt. to withdraw from controversial canal project

During the inaugural session, Ambassador Masood Khan, former President 'AJK' said that "Pakistan has always stood for the preservation of 'Kashmiriyat' and the identity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir," and "this workshop underscores our commitment to foster a dialogue that empowers the youth and strengthens their connection to their heritage."

Speaking on occasion, Mishal Hussein Malik urged the youth to use the latest technological tools like social media platforms to highlight the sacrifices of innocent Kashmiri people for their right of self-determination.

She also stressed organising local training programmes, media campaigns, cultural festivals, and civil society engagement to support the robust struggle of the oppressed Kashmiris. Malik urged the youth of Pakistan and 'AJK' to speed up their struggle and stand in solidarity with

the people of Kashmir, who have been suffering under 'Indian occupation for decades'.

The event served as a testament to Pakistan's dedication to supporting the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir while reinforcing the shared cultural and historical bonds that united the two regions.

https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Dec-2024/workshop-on-ajk-and-pakistan-intertwinedfate-and-shared-challenges-held

# Making 'Azad Kashmir' a model and prosperous state is the need of hour: Tahir Khokhar

Daily Parliament Times, 29 December 2024

Former **Tourism** and **Transport** Minister of 'Azad Kashmir' Tahir Khokhar said that the coming time in 'Azad Kashmir' has knocked the revolution. This revolution will change the destiny of the state and 'Azad Kashmir'. It will emerge prosperous and model state. The people must now write their own destiny. This is not a time for despair but for action, and a new era of progress is about to begin. 'Azad Kashmir' can be made an ideal region through people's power and unity. Tahir Khokhar said that the Kashmiri people will have to change the destiny of their own state. Making 'Azad Kashmir' a model and prosperous state is the need of the hour. To usher 'Azad Kashmir' into new development, the tourism industry has to be promoted, through which not stability only economic will

achieved but also the state can be highlighted internationally. Kashmir' can be transformed into an industrial hub, which will create employment opportunities and give the youth an opportunity to utilize their skills. He urged the people to stand united for their rights. And present this region to the world as a prosperous, model state. This will only be possible with the power of the people and their hard work. To turn the dream of a bright future of 'Azad Kashmir' into a reality, the people have decisions make tough themselves, where only the meritorious and worthy youth who can change the destiny of the state, who understand the problems of the people from the grass root level, and the problems of the people. The state needs capable people who understand the problems of the state and invest their energies in making the state developed. We were with the people yesterday and we are still with the people today. He said that I appeal to the entire Kashmiri nation to unite for this state. If the state is developed and happy, then happiness will come to the people.

https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2024/12/29 /making-azad-kashmir-a-model-and-prosperousstate-is-the-need-of-hour-tahir-khokhar/

# **Economic Developments**

# Muzaffarabad motorway plan progress reviewed

Business Recorder, 25 December 2024

The 4th meeting of the Kashmir Committee was held under the chairmanship of Rana Qasim Noon.

The Prime Minister of 'Azad Kashmir', Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq also participated in the meeting and discussed the Kashmir issue and various developmental projects. Noon emphasised that Kashmir was the lifeline of Pakistan.

He said the people of Pakistan were extending consistent support to Kashmiris at every level. "Pakistan stands by its Kashmiri brothers and sisters on moral, diplomatic, and all other fronts," he maintained.

Progress on the Muzaffarabad motorway plan and construction of the Rathwa Hariam Bridge on the Mirpur-Islamabad Road was also reviewed in the meeting.

The committee emphatically discussed the gross human rights violations in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) and reaffirmed its commitment to raising global awareness of the inhumane treatment of Kashmiris, particularly following the abolition of Articles 370 and 35-A of the Indian Constitution.

The committee discussed federal mega projects, including the Shurter Tunnel Plan, an important initiative connecting 'Azad Kashmir' and Gilgit-Baltistan.

'AJK' PM Anwar ul Haq told reporters that feasibility studies for Mirpur Airport were also discussed in the meeting besides subsidies on power bill and floor to the local population of liberated valley.

The committee also discussed the plans for the restoration of populations affected by cross-border conflicts and infrastructure development, including education and health, were highlighted.

Qasim Noon and the prime minister of 'Azad Kashmir' reaffirmed their commitment for resisting the Hindutva agenda and supporting the Kashmiri people.

The ideology of Pakistan remains central to the ongoing struggle for the rights of Kashmiris, he added.

https://www.brecorder.com/news/40339435/muzaff arabad-motorway-plan-progress-reviewed

## 'AJK' Business Tycoon Javed Iqbal Ch. inducted as VP, United Business Group (UBG) of Pakistan

Daily Parliament Times, 26 December 2024

United Business Group of Pakistan (UBG) has inducted Mr. Javeid Iqbal Chaudhry veteran business tycoon of 'Azad Jammu Kashmir', as Vice President of the organization, says an official notification issued by the organisation.

Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) President Atif Ikram Shaikh handed over the notification of appointment to the newly appointed Vice President of the UBG Chaudhry Javed Iqbal, the former Vice President of the FPCCI and ex severally times President of 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' Chamber of Commerce and Industries and Mirpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries, at a ceremony held at FPCCI Capital Office Islamabad Wednesday, the official notification issued by the United Business Group, released to the media here on Thursday said.

Our Special Jammu and Kashmir state Correspondent Altaf Hamid reports from Mirpur 'AJK' that besides FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh, UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, UBG Islamabad Region President Abdul Rauf Alam, ICCI President Nasir Qureshi, Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, former Chairman Funders Group Khalid Iqbal Malik, former Senior Vice President of ICCI Fad Waheed, Senior Vice President of UBG Islam Region Johar Ali, Kashif Nazir Bajar and other prominent personalities belonging to top Business community Pakistan and 'AJK' was also present on this occasion.

Speaking on this occasion the FPCCI President Atif Ikram Shaikh said that the appointment of Chaudhry Javed Iqbal was an important step in the reorganization of UBG.

UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtavari said that UBG Patron General SM Tanveer has taken series of healthy measures to make the organization dynamic and vibrant.

That UBG, he continued, was determined to achieve more success under his leadership.

Lauding Javed's induction as VP in the august national Business community forum, Abdul Rauf said that Chaudhry Javed Iqbal has already proved his abilities and high professional intellect in the past since he successfully rendered his excellent services in FPCCI and Mirpur, AJKCCI.

"UBG values his services and inshallah he, under the dynamic leadership of the UBG President, will further strengthen and stabilize the organization with his skills in Pakistan as well as 'Azad Jammu Kashmir', since Pakistan is incomplete without its jugular vein-Kashmir.

https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2024/12/26/ /ajk-business-tycoon-javed-iqbal-ch-inducted-asvp-united-business-group-ubg-of-pakistan/

## From Vernacular Urdu Media

# Every child of 'Azad Kashmir' stands with Pakistan army: Prime Minister

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 27 December 2024

Prime Minister 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir', Chaudhary Anwar ul Haq said that every child of 'Azad Kashmir' stands with the Pakistan army. Missile technology and Atomic weapons are essential for our country's survival, and where military has become weak not only has led to change in viewpoint but also the borders of the states have been destroyed. If we had no technology program or Atomic weapons our situation would have been similar to Egypt, Libya Lebanon, and Gaza. Such thoughts were shared by Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq in a Jammu and assembly session Kashmir responding to a discussion as raised by former Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan. Facts have been twisted said Anwar ul Haq. He said that if Pakistan army is taken out from this region, which force will protect our mothers, sisters and daughters? You should articulate your viewpoints well within the limits of the constitution. In the matters of the national security, no controversial talk should happen. He said that the strength of missile technology and atomic weaponry cannot be rejected by any political leadership.

https://jammukashmirtimes.com/wpcontent/uploads/2024/12/Resize-of-PAGE-03-1-11.jpg

For fight against conspiracies and propaganda of anti-state agencies, journalists must play their role: Information Minister Peer Mazhar Shah

Urdu Point, 26 December 2024

Information minister 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' government Maulana Peer Mohammad Mazhar Sayeed Shah as a special guest in an oath ceremony of Neelum Press Club while addressing said that vis a vis Awami Action Committee's protests, government in order to avoid confusion relied on wisdom. For fight against conspiracies and propaganda of anti-state agencies, journalists must play their role, he added.

On social media platforms, rumors are spread and it is indeed disheartening to see recourse to such path. Journalism is fourth pillar of the state. All pertaining issues need to be raised and there exists no ban in having any sort of opinion in 'Azad Kashmir'. In Neelum we are constructing state of art Press Club building. Despite shortage of resources, journalists have raised people's issues and have kept alive the 'movement for liberation of Kashmir'.

Peer Mazhar Shah said that representing is a tradition and our Prophet in fight against propaganda of non-believers took to latest means so that Islam reach every door-step. We too should by using latest means expose the enemy's propaganda. Creating misconceptions and confusions among the public are more dangerous than assassinating someone.

Neelum For the Press information minister announced five lakh rupees. Peer Mazhar Shah said that representing the government remains the duty of information minister and he is trying his best to perform this duty. In the recent protest led by the Awami Action Committee, the government in good faith and right intentions avoided any confusion that may have resulted and choose right selection of words to maintain peace. In the swearing ceremony, member board of governing body press foundation Hayat Awan, former president Press Club Hafiz Naseer ud din Mughal, Usman Tariq Chugtai, Arshid Ahmad Sheikh among others also spoke on the occasion.

https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaf farabad/national-news/live-news-4277003.html

# Have seen extreme crisis and leadership has to face cost of work: Prime Minister 'Azad Kashmir'

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 25 December 2024

Prime Minister 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' Chaudhary Anwar ul Haq said that even bureaucracy while performing its duty faces number of challenges. Color, caste, region, brotherhood should be buried and instead merit be prioritized. In the last 20 months I have faced extreme challenges. In the last fifteen days, you might have heard that I am visiting this place and then arriving to a different place. Such remains the news but the real conversation begins once the tenure comes to an end. In the tenure of former Chief secretary 'Azad Kashmir', Dawood Mohammad Bareach we faced countless challenges. But the beauty is that the way he handled also those challenges and performed his duty remains exemplary. We rarely find such kind of persons and he is leaving beautiful memories behind. Besides professional service, a bond will remain intact with him. During fifteen months, we didn't even have a slight disagreement on anything. thoughts were shared by Prime Minister in a function in Muzaffarabad held in respect of former chief secretary Dawood Mohammad Bareach.

https://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/1-7.jpg

### From Social Media

Roshan Din Diameri @Roshan\_Din

30 December 2024

These days in Gilgit-Baltistan, there is no water, no electricity, no internet, and no political leadership. Those who have a little money have set up camp in Islamabad. The rest of the poor people are suffering and dying in shame. This trend will continue until the public becomes aware.

#Gilgitbaltistan

Link to the tweet:

https://x.com/Rohshan Din/status/1873441301854 822776

#### WAJAHAT ALI @wajahatgilgiti

27 December 2024

Javed Manwa addressing the assembly session

#gilgitbaltistan #assembly #session

Link to the video:

https://x.com/wajahatgilgiti/status/1872358281764 848107

#### **PAMIR Times** @pamirtimes

27 December 2024

Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Faces Absenteeism Crisis as Majority of Members Skip Session

The Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly appeared largely deserted today as 18 members were conspicuously absent

from the session, leaving only 13 members in attendance. This significant lack of quorum raises concerns about the assembly's ability to effectively govern and address pressing issues in the region.

The absence of a majority of members has sparked debates on the dedication and commitment of the elected officials to their legislative responsibilities. Analysts fear that this trend, if continued, could hinder the legislative process and delay crucial decision-making for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Citizens and political commentators are calling for greater accountability and a renewed focus on the importance of active participation in the legislative process to ensure that the needs and aspirations of the region's residents are adequately represented and addressed.

Link to the tweet:

https://x.com/pamirtimes/status/187235614469564 4633

#### Roshan Din Diameri @Roshan Din

27 December 2024

BSF students who are marching from Gilgit to Skardu will reach Skardu tomorrow. A public meeting will be held at Yadgar Chowk at 1.30 pm. BSF Press Release.

Link to the tweet:

<u>https://x.com/Rohshan Din/status/1872681298671</u> 943977

# **Weekly POK News Digest**

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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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