

# Weekly POK News Digest

*(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)*

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16 February - 22 February 2026

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**Digital Reforms**  
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**Diamer-Bhasha Dam**  
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## Political Developments

### **‘Azad Kashmir’ gets new police chief**

*Dawn, 16 February 2026*

The federal government on Sunday transferred and posted a Grade-20 officer of the Police Service of Pakistan (PSP) as the new inspector general of police (IGP) in ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (AJK).

According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Capt (retired) Liaqat Ali Malik, who was serving under the Punjab government as DIG Establishment, has been transferred and his services placed at the disposal of the ‘AJK’ government with immediate effect and until further orders. The notification stated that the posting had been made under Section 10 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973, read with Clause viii of the Karachi Agreement, 1949.

Clause viii of the Karachi Agreement, signed in 1949 by then ‘AJK’ president Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, Muslim Conference leader Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas and federal minister without portfolio Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani, provides that the services of officers loaned to the ‘AJK’ government would be placed at its disposal, after which they would be formally appointed through a notification in the ‘AJK’ gazette.

Before 2014, officers posted by the federal government to at least five key positions in ‘AJK’ — commonly referred to as “lent officers” — would

assume charge upon the issuance of a notification by the Establishment Division.

However, following differences between the then PPP government in Muzaffarabad and the PML-N government in Islamabad, it was mutually agreed that transfers and postings of lent officers in ‘AJK’ would take effect only after notification by the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD) with the approval of the ‘AJK’ prime minister.

Mr Malik replaces Rana Abdul Jabbar, who had been posted to ‘AJK’ in May 2024, and was nominated for the four-month National Management Course in Lahore early last month. As a stopgap arrangement, Additional IGP Yasin Qureshi, who belongs to the ‘AJK’ police service, had been assigned the additional charge of the region’s police chief.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1973503/azad-kashmir-gets-new-police-chief>

### **GB protesters block road against power outage, water shortage**

*Dawn, 17 February 2026*

Women on Monday staged protest and blocked the main road in Gilgit against prolonged power outages and a drinking water shortage in the Jutial area, while students of Pakistan Baitul Mal (PBM) also took to the streets over non-payment of their school fees.

A large number of women staged a sit-in outside the Gilgit-Baltistan Supreme

Appellate Court and blocked the Shahrah-i-Quaid-i-Azam road in Gilgit city, protesting extended electricity outages and a lack of drinking water in Jutial. The protesting women chanted slogans against the government, alleging its failure to provide basic facilities such as electricity and clean drinking water.

Speaking on the occasion, a women's representative said residents of Hussainabad Colony, Yasin Colony, Diamer Colony, Netco Colony, and other areas had been deprived of water for the past two weeks. She said water supply to upper Jutial had been suspended for several days.

The protesters said they had previously been receiving water once every couple of days to store in tanks for drinking and daily use. However, for the past 10 days, no water had been supplied. Residents are also facing up to 22 hours of electricity load-shedding daily, preventing water pumps from operating even when water becomes available in the pipeline.

Another protester criticised the government for failing to provide basic necessities, blaming corruption and poor governance for the crisis. She said successive governments had failed to resolve electricity issues despite spending billions of rupees annually.

### **Negotiations with protesters**

Later, GB Caretaker Home Minister Sajid Ali Baig and district

administration officials reached the site, held negotiations with the protesters, and convinced them to end the demonstration.

Traffic on Shahrah-i-Quaid-i-Azam remained suspended for several hours, causing long queues on both sides of the road and difficulties for commuters.

### **Students stage protest**

Meanwhile, the students of PBM Sweet Home staged a protest demonstration at Public Chowk in Gilgit against the administration for failing to pay their school fees. The protesting students opposed the decision to shift them from Police Public School to a government-run institution. The students, who said they were orphan boys residing at PBM Sweet Home in Gilgit, said that they had been enrolled in a private school but were expelled due to non-payment of fees by the PBM administration.

They alleged that officials were denying them their educational rights and demanded restoration of their previous school arrangements. Caretaker Home Minister Sajid Ali Baig visited the protest site, met the students and officials, and took notice of the issue.

The minister directed the relevant authorities to monitor the situation and ensure a permanent solution to the problem.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1973794/gb-protesters-block-road-against-power-outage-water-shortage>

## **From Awareness to Action: Integrating Climate Change Education in Schools**

*Pamir Times, 17 February 2026*

The increasing frequency of extreme weather threats, rising temperatures, and worsening environmental damage warns of the urgent need for climate change education in this mountainous terrain of Gilgit-Baltistan. Climate change has become a serious threat to this region and is one of the greatest challenges of the twenty-first century. Mother nature has been striking us recently with Glacial Lake Outburst Floods, rain floods, cloudbursts and landslides but we are yet to realize the intensity.

The deteriorating climate changes are putting pressure on our unprepared educational system resulting into the destruction of schools, displaced communities, and interrupted children's learning opportunities. Children in these conditions are especially at high-risk from the escalation of climate-related disasters. The increasing disasters negatively affect children's well-being to flourish and reach their full potential. The region is yet to realize the potential of schools as the powerful spaces for climate change education, especially for learners, helping them to connect their knowledge with real world climate challenges.

More than ever, we must prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to manage the

increasingly complex social and environmental issues of today in order to prevent environmental problems from becoming more disastrous. At the school level, small-scale interventions can create long-lasting environment friendly ideals, attitudes, and characters among the younger generation of this region. Integration of climate education into the school education syllabus can greatly contribute to the cause of environmental protection. Integrating climate change education into science subjects such as biology, chemistry, and physics allows students to explore climate change issues through a multidisciplinary lens, fostering a deeper understanding of its scientific and socio-economic dimensions.

Even at the primary level organizing local fieldwork and observational studies can help students explore real-world climate and sustainability issues in their own communities. Fieldwork is an essential component of our social studies syllabus, offering students hands-on experiences to explore, observe and interact with the environment. Exposure to observe the glaciers, rivers, and mountains gives them the chance to explore nature directly, encouraging curiosity and caring for the environment. Likewise, activities such as gardening or recycling help children practice sustainable habits in meaningful ways. These practical experiences make abstract concepts more tangible and help students see the relevance of

climate education in their lives. Such activities must be coupled with discussions and debates for widening the climate-related education of young children. To increase students' awareness of environmental issues and motivate them to support sustainable practices, invitation of specialists and guest speakers from the fields of climate change, renewable energy, and environmental studies can further augment the process of learning.

Teachers must realize their critical role in environmental education for the young children in the schools. It is teachers' prime responsibility to educate the children to live in an environmentally conscientious manner. Teachers need to employ various pedagogical methods for bringing climate change education into real classrooms which includes the inquiry-based learning and problem-focused, project-based learning assignments by involving students with hands-on activities to study climate change experiments, case studies, and real-world problem-solving. The teaching and learning process needs to be integrated with the environment to create a deep connection with nature, cultivate empathy for the environment, and strengthen commitment to its preservation. Lessons become more relevant and understandable when they are tied to the local environment, allowing kids to comprehend the unique climatic issues that affect their area.

Above all, this is the time where policymakers and government functionaries must realize the criticality of the situation in this vulnerable mountainous region and give top priority to climate education in our schools. Climate-related interventions like "Nature Clubs" at school level must be made mandatory for the schools and colleges so that the younger generation are prepared for the upcoming challenges.

The small-scale interventions proposed above can be rewarding in multiple ways for the younger generation. For example, integrating climate change education into core subjects can build a solid scientific foundation while highlighting real-world connections. By linking theoretical knowledge with practical applications, students can better address the environmental issues. A well-designed school syllabus with relevant teaching and learning materials can equip students with deeper knowledge and understanding of climate awareness and challenges ahead for our region. Studying the concepts like greenhouse gases as a cause of climate change, are critical for deeper comprehension of the big picture for young children.

By climate awareness interventions young students can be informed and empowered to make informed decisions, adopt sustainable practices, and contribute to climate action efforts. A well-structured climate change education enhances critical thinking and problem-solving abilities by

encouraging students to analyze climate-related data, assess environmental policies, and engage in scientific inquiry. Studies have shown that students who receive education on climate change demonstrate greater environmental awareness and are more likely to advocate for sustainable initiatives.

This interactive, hands-on learning platform helps them to demonstrate their capacity as change agents and build sense of responsibility. Through this initiative they will be more inclined to act and simply discipline themselves to abstain from the human activities that harm environment like decreasing junk food, recycling, using less plastic, and developing innovative digital solutions, and can set an example for others to follow them in protecting the environment. Young students can be responsible for setting bins, sort, and mark them in various categories, such as recycling materials, organic materials, and plastic materials, where they will be responsible to deposit the organic materials into the ground and re-use the recycling materials. Students can develop a sense of growing plants and vegetables in the school grounds and in their homes.

Research studies suggest that children who participate in citizen science, fieldwork, and school-based sustainability initiatives may develop more climate literacy and are more likely to act in an environmentally friendly manner. Several industrialized nations have incorporated

environmental change education into their national syllabus with an emphasis on interdisciplinary learning and the application to real-world problem solving. Some of them have incorporated indigenous knowledge in climate education whereby students learn traditional ecological practices and their relevance to contemporary concerns. Hence, climate change is one of the most pressing challenges and we are on the cusp of a situation of now or never prioritizing climate education keeping in view the vulnerability of our region.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2026/02/17/from-awareness-to-action-integrating-climate-change-education-in-schools/>

<https://www.nation.com.pk/18-Feb-2026/national-strategy-urged-counter-indian-water-aggression>

### **Uproar in 'AJK' Assembly over ministers' absence**

*Dawn, 18 February 2026*

The 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' Legislative Assembly on Tuesday witnessed heated exchanges as ministers' absence during the early part of the sitting and an aggressive opposition prompted Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar to intervene on several occasions in government's defence.

The session, which had been requisitioned by the joint opposition, began two hours behind schedule. While 16 lawmakers were present on the opposition benches, the treasury side was represented by Finance

Minister Chaudhry Qasim Majeed, who was accompanied by Javed Butt and Asim Sharif Butt from the refugee constituencies.

As proceedings got underway, Leader of the Opposition Shah Ghulam Qadir objected to the absence of ministers, arguing that since the sitting had been summoned at the opposition's request, the government's failure to ensure ministerial presence defeated its very purpose. "Completion of quorum does not absolve the government of accountability," he said, asking whether ministers were afraid of responding to questions and stressing that the question hour could only be deferred in accordance with the rules.

Former prime minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq, who sits on the opposition benches, said the matter was not about point-scoring and maintained that once the agenda had been circulated, the question hour could be postponed only through suspension of the relevant rules.

Echoing their views, ex-premier Raja Farooq Haider said it was the government's responsibility to answer questions in a session requisitioned by the opposition. "It is the Speaker's duty to ensure the government's presence for accountability. This concerns the sanctity of the House," he said, urging the chair not to respond on behalf of ministers.

In response, the Speaker remarked that if ministers were not present, he could

hardly "produce them from somewhere".

Debate intensified over a short-notice question moved by Mr Haq about allocation for 500km of roads under block provisions in the highways department. When the finance minister said the decisions had been taken during the ex-premier's tenure, Mr Haq demanded production of the relevant notifications and warned that failure to provide answers could lead to a privilege motion.

On another short-notice question by opposition's Sardar Mir Akbar regarding whether a high school could be upgraded directly to a degree college, Minister for Power Development Chaudhry Rasheed said the issue had already been discussed and that higher secondary schools could be granted degree status under policy, though Higher Education Minister Malik Zafar Iqbal later clarified that under the newly notified education policy – framed in light of directions from the Supreme Court – no institution would be upgraded without staff and infrastructure.

During the question hour, a list of 68 newspapers that had received government ads from January 2024 to June 2025 was tabled, but did not disclose the volume or value of the advertisements.

Forest Minister Sardar Javed Ayoub insisted that the written reply was clear and said a separate question should be

submitted to seek details of the volume and value of the ads. He said there was no secret fund in the information department.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1974043/uproar-in-ajk-assembly-over-ministers-absence>

### **Imported wheat supplied to ‘AJK’ termed ‘unfit for consumption’; PM urged to intervene**

*Dawn, 19 February 2026*

The ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (‘AJK’) government has urged Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to intervene over the continued supply of imported wheat allegedly declared unfit for human consumption, warning that the situation could trigger public unrest in the region.

Official sources told Dawn on Wednesday that the ‘AJK’ authorities had conveyed serious concern to the federal government over the quality of imported wheat being supplied through the Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (Passco), and sought its immediate replacement with locally produced wheat of fair average quality (FAQ) standard.

‘AJK’ procures around 300,000 tonnes of wheat annually to meet its food security requirements. Under a 2023 decision of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), Passco has since been supplying wheat to ‘AJK’ in a 50:50 ratio of indigenous and imported stocks — unlike Gilgit-Baltistan, which receives 75pc local and 25pc imported wheat.

According to ‘AJK’ officials, the imported wheat - procured in 2022 by the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) from Ukraine - has exceeded its prescribed shelf life and developed an unpleasant odour. Laboratory assessments conducted by the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) reportedly found that the commodity did not meet food safety standards.

Officials maintained that flour milled entirely from the imported wheat was unsafe for human consumption. As a temporary measure, the ‘AJK’ Food Department had been blending imported stocks with local wheat to maintain minimum quality standards.

Despite repeated representations to the Ministry of National Food Security and Research and Passco over the past three years, officials said no remedial action had been taken.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1974216/imported-wheat-termed-unfit-for-consumption-ajk-pm-urged-to-intervene>

### **Naqvi, G-B caretaker CM discuss law and order, CTD rollout**

*The Express Tribune, 21 February 2026*

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met Gilgit-Baltistan Caretaker Chief Minister Justice (retd.) Yar Muhammad Khan to discuss security arrangements, law and order, and promotion of tourism ahead of elections in the region. During the meeting, the two sides reviewed measures to maintain

peace during the electoral process and strengthen the security framework in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The caretaker chief minister said the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) would soon be made operational in the region. The Counter-Terrorism Department, or CTD, is a specialised wing of provincial police forces in Pakistan responsible for preventing, detecting and investigating terrorism-related offences.

It conducts intelligence-based operations against militant networks, handles terror financing cases, and works with federal agencies on counter-extremism efforts. CTD units operate under provincial home departments and have powers to register and investigate cases under anti-terror laws.

Naqvi assured full federal support for the CTD, saying modern technology and weapons would be provided. He also assured that all requirements of Gilgit-Baltistan would be fulfilled and said additional personnel would be deployed during the elections. “Law and order will be maintained at all costs,” the interior minister said, adding that a safe and peaceful environment was essential for the promotion of tourism. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring a secure atmosphere for residents and visitors alike.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2593794/naqvi-g-b-caretaker-cm-discuss-law-and-order-ctd-rollout>

## [Economic Developments](#)

### **Pakistan-‘AJK’ cross-jurisdictional deals: FBR decides plea over alleged double taxation**

*Business Recorder, 16 February*

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) formally disposed of a representation filed under Section 7 of the FBR Act, 2007, concerning allegations of double taxation on certain cross-jurisdictional transactions involving Pakistan and ‘Azad Jammu & Kashmir’ (‘AJK’).

The FBR cited its lack of administrative control over the CBR ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ as the basis for its decision.

According to an official letter issued by FBR, the applicant had approached the FBR seeking relief from what they described as duplicative sales and withholding tax deductions being applied to transactions conducted across different jurisdictions, including Pakistan-administered regions and ‘AJK’. The matter was reviewed in consultation with the IR-Litigation, who examined the jurisdictional and administrative aspects of the claims. The report concluded that the issues raised fell outside the jurisdiction of FBR Headquarters, and emphasized that taxation concerns specific to the regions involved must be addressed through the respective tax authorities operating there.

When contacted, tax lawyer Waheed Shahzad Butt, representing the affected parties, explained that the matter highlights a serious jurisdictional

conflict between the FBR and the 'AJK' Council Board of Revenue (CBR Kashmir) regarding sales and withholding tax on transactions with 'AJK'-based customers.

We approached the FBR seeking relief on the grounds that sales and withholding tax deductions were being applied twice for transactions conducted across different jurisdictions," Butt said. "Although the taxpayer already deposits all taxes with the FBR, 'AJK' authorities are also demanding that withholding tax under Section 236H and related statements be filed with them through what we consider an improper mechanism." Butt warned that this dual regime creates significant risks for compliant taxpayers, including double taxation, inconsistent enforcement, data mismatches, and potential adverse inferences by tax authorities.

Based on this assessment, the FBR stated that it lacks the mandate to intervene in the matter. Consequently, the representation has been disposed of without further action, and applicants have been advised that their concerns do not fall within the FBR's administrative authority.

The decision leaves taxpayers operating across these jurisdictions in a state of uncertainty, with no clear resolution to the conflicting tax demands from separate revenue authorities, Waheed added.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40407395/pakistan-ajk-cross-jurisdictional-deals-fbr-decides-plea-over-alleged-double-taxation>

## **'AJK' announces legal, digital reforms to attract overseas investment**

*The Dawn, 17 February 2026*

'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' ('AJK') Prime Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore on Monday announced a series of policy and legal measures aimed at restoring investors' confidence and steering the 'liberated territory' towards a digitally driven and economically stable future. The announcements were made at the first Overseas Kashmiris Convention, held at a local hotel here under the aegis of the 'AJK' government in collaboration with the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF).

Addressing the inaugural session, the prime minister said the initiative marked a "practical beginning" of long-term economic transformation rather than a ceremonial gathering. He said the government had approved the establishment of Real Estate Special Courts, bound to decide cases within 90 days, to ensure transparency and swift dispute resolution.

Existing laws would be reviewed and, if required, new legislation introduced to remove hurdles to business and industrial growth. "There will be no policy paralysis; we will move forward with continuity and provide a clear and stable environment to investors," he vowed.

Describing overseas Kashmiris as a valuable asset and "architects of the future", the prime minister said the

[already established] Overseas Commission and an Overseas Commissioner would address their issues on a priority basis and facilitate them at every stage of investment.

He also inaugurated the Overseas Kashmiris Grievances Redressal Portal, developed by the Information Technology Board, to ensure faster and transparent complaint handling.

Mr Rathore said six industrial units were available in Mirpur, while a dry port project was nearing completion to facilitate imports and exports. A one-window operation covering registration, licensing and certification had been formally launched and was being further digitised with the cooperation of NADRA to eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic procedures.

Terming information technology (IT) and artificial intelligence (AI) the foundation of the modern economy, he said practical work on IT parks had begun and PTCL fibre-optic connectivity would provide high-speed internet access. Special programmes would be introduced to train youth in IT, software development, freelancing, e-commerce and AI to enhance employment and boost IT exports.

Referring to a private firm's initiative to provide jobs to 4,000 youth in Bagh, he said the development demonstrated that 'AJK' could emerge as an IT hub if the right environment was ensured.

Highlighting other sectors, the prime minister said public-private partnerships were being promoted in education to improve standards, while existing hospital infrastructure, colleges, universities and medical colleges would be made more effective. He said the region was rich in rare earth minerals and gemstones, announcing that a Centre of Gemstones would be established in Muzaffarabad to modernise the sector. Renewable energy, particularly solar power, and sustainable tourism would also be prioritised.

He reiterated that economic progress would be aligned with the Kashmir freedom movement and said 'AJKs' relationship with Pakistan was rooted in shared faith. "Pakistan's success is our success," he added.

Earlier, Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Engr Amir Muqam said overseas Pakistanis and Kashmiris were serving the country by highlighting the Kashmir issue internationally and sending valuable foreign exchange. He expressed hope that work on the Muzaffarabad, Mirpur and Mansehra motorway would begin soon.

OFP Chairman Syed Qamar Raza said overseas Pakistanis and Kashmiris were the backbone of the economy, contributing nearly 80pc of the country's foreign exchange. Remittances stood at \$33.5 billion last year and were expected to reach \$41bn

this year, he added, while calling for greater private-sector participation to create jobs and promote investment.

The session was also addressed by Leader of the Opposition Shah Ghulam Qadir, All Parties Hurriyat Conference convener Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Barrister Abid Hussain, first Muslim Pakistani president of Oldham Law Association, Farooq Kirmani, a retired deputy secretary in the occupied Kashmir administration, and Overseas Commissioner Azhar Baralvi and chief secretary Khushal Khan

In the second session, focused group discussions were held on four themes - barriers and challenges faced by the Kashmiri diaspora; contemporary issues; business and investment opportunities; and gender and youth engagement –followed by presentations of brief summaries by group leaders and a question-and-answer session with a panel headed by the prime minister.

“Overseas Kashmiris should bring investment to the state; we will remove all their objections and reservations. Investment, in fact, is a renewal of our relationship and an expression of mutual trust,” the prime minister said, and directed the chief secretary to prepare a comprehensive policy paper in the light of the recommendations.

‘AJK’ President Chaudhry Latif Akbar, who also attended the plenary session, delivered the concluding speech, congratulating the government on holding the convention and urging

overseas Kashmiris to continue playing their valuable role in the progress of their homeland as well as the projection of Kashmir cause with enhanced commitment.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1973741/ajk-announces-legal-digital-reforms-to-attract-overseas-investment>

### **Diamer-Bhasha dam cost surges by \$3.5b**

*The Express Tribune, 20 February 2026*

A Senate panel was informed on Thursday that consultations with provinces on the Dams Safety Bill have been completed and the draft legislation will soon be presented before the federal cabinet.

The Senate Standing Committee on Water Resources, which met under the chairmanship of Jam Saifullah Khan, was told by Water Resources Secretary Syed Ali Murtaza that the proposed bill has undergone provincial consultation and is now ready for submission to the cabinet.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on the bill, encroachments in river waterways, flood management mechanisms and the evolving situation surrounding the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).

WAPDA officials informed the committee that work on the Diamer-Bhasha dam has reached 21 per cent completion, while progress on the Dasu dam stands at 30 per cent. However, more than \$3.5 billion in additional

funding will be required to complete the Diamer-Bhasha project.

The committee was further briefed that the responsibility for preventing obstructions in water channels lies with provincial irrigation departments. Officials of the Federal Flood Commission (FFC) apprised the panel that Punjab has removed 2,625 encroachments from river waterways, though 83 obstructions still remain.

According to officials, SUPARCO has also confirmed the removal of encroachments. The committee was told that provinces bear primary responsibility for encroachments in river channels.

Chairperson Jam Saifullah Khan acknowledged that encroachments in waterways are a ground reality and questioned what effective solutions could be adopted to prevent them.

Additional Secretary Water Resources Syed Mehr Ali Shah stressed the need to assess whether provinces have undertaken zoning of riverine areas, identified high-risk and low-risk zones in case of floods, and mapped populations or strategic installations located within those areas.

He also inquired whether any regulatory framework related to flood management had been developed at the provincial level.

The secretary informed the committee that the National Flood Protection Plan (NFPP) has already been submitted to

the Council of Common Interests (CCI) for approval.

FFC officials proposed the installation of 707 telemetry stations across the country with assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2593571/diamer-bhasha-dam-cost-surges-by-35b?amp=1>

### **From Vernacular Urdu Media**

#### **Won't Let Attempts to Weaken the Democratic Order Succeed in 'AJK': Joint Opposition**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, 19 February 2026*

In the 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' ('AJK') Legislative Assembly, the combined opposition, while levelling strong allegations against the Pakistan People's Party-led government, said that the government has lost its majority and is evading constitutional accountability. The opposition leaders unequivocally maintained that any attempt to sabotage the upcoming elections or weaken the democratic order would be thwarted. If any force or unconstitutional means were used to disturb the democratic system, all political parties would jointly prevent it from happening.

The opposition emphasized that the government, instead of prioritizing party interests, should focus on the state of 'AJK' and strive for the welfare of its people. They also stressed that the government must ensure it does not

violate any constitutional or democratic norms.

<https://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Resize-of-FRONT-PAGE-19.jpg>

### **MWM Leader Slams Government over Prolonged Power Crisis**

*Daily K2, 20 February 2026*

Kazim Maisam, Divisional Secretary of Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) and former opposition leader in the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly, has strongly criticized the Government for failing to resolve the persistent electricity crisis in the region.

Speaking to the media, Kazim Maisam said that for the past five years, his party had repeatedly raised the issue of electricity shortages in the Assembly. However, he alleged that their protests and demands were met only with “stories” and false assurances. “Every time we are deceived, and the electricity issue is deliberately left unresolved,” he stated, adding that the Government continues to make false promises.

He further pointed out that even on the first day of Ramadan ul Mubarak, the Government’s assurances proved hollow, as residents were forced to observe *Sehri* (pre-dawn meal) and *Aftaar* (breaking of the fast) in darkness due to prolonged power outages. The situation led to widespread public criticism of the authorities.

Kazim emphasized that he has consistently advocated principled

politics and urged the government to prioritize resolving the electricity crisis and other pressing public issues without further delay.

<https://epaper.dailyk2.com/story/3944>

### **Nawaz Sharif to undertake a two-day visit to ‘Azad Kashmir’ on February 23**

*Urdu Point, 19 February 2026*

According to sources, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), will undertake an important two-day visit to ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (‘AJK’) next week. He is scheduled to arrive in Muzaffarabad on February 23 and will conclude his visit and depart on February 24. During the visit, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz will also accompany him.

Nawaz Sharif will hold important meetings with the party leadership and workers in ‘Azad Kashmir’. These meetings will include PML-N ‘AJK’ President, Shah Ghulam Qadir, Parliamentary Leader, Raja Farooq Haider Khan, and other party leaders. Sharif’s visit will focus on the current political situation of ‘AJK’, organizational matters and election strategy for the upcoming elections. Besides this, the meetings with candidates who have applied for party tickets for the forthcoming General Elections in ‘AJK’ are also expected. Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Engineer Amir Muqam has confirmed Nawaz Sharif’s visit.

During the trip, Nawaz Sharif will also visit the residence of former Prime Minister of 'AJK' Raja Farooq Haider in Muzaffarabad. The visit will mark the formal beginning of PML-N's election preparations in 'AJK'. Party leaders will be given instructions regarding the future course of action, and it is likely that tickets for some constituencies in 'AJK' will also be finalized on this occasion.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-4722489.html>

### **From Social Media**

#### **TARIQ NAQASH @TariqNaqash**

17 February 2026

90 days down the lane, 4 ex #AJK ministers haven't returned official vehicles. One was elected on a fake State Subject certificate; another openly bragged today he keeps it by firepower. My take: No one is above the law—except when those meant to enforce it become partners in crime

**Link to the tweet:**

<https://x.com/TariqNaqash/status/2023802699041648853>

#### **PAMIR TIMES @pamirtimes**

17 February 2026

From Awareness to Action: Integrating Climate Change Education in Schools

**Link to the tweet:**

<https://x.com/pamirtimes/status/2023636373018661330>

#### **JAMIL NAGRI @jamilnagri**

12 February 2026

Two terrorists killed three injured in exchange of firing after an ambush on FWO vehicle in which driver martyred and three including major were injured in Tangir valley of Diamer.

**Link to the tweet:**

<https://x.com/jamilnagri/status/2021944204294074524>

#### **WAJAHAT ALI @wajahatgilgiti**

13 February 2025

Few politicians are trying to turn Gilgit-Baltistan into Lebanon, which is absolutely unacceptable under any circumstances: Traders Union Action Committee #gilgitbaltistan #tajir #Etihad #actioncommittee #wtv #pak #china #trade #FBR #primeminister

**Link to the tweet:**

<https://x.com/wajahatgilgiti/status/2024168700644044867>

#### **JAMIL NAGRI @jamilnagri**

17 February 2026

Allege corruption, poor governance behind crisis, women staged protest and blocked the main road in Gilgit against prolonged power outages & a drinking water shortage, students of Baitul Mal also took to the streets over non-payment of their school fees

**Link to the tweet:**

<https://x.com/jamilnagri/status/2023698821839241402>

# 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. The Institute does not subscribe to the views expressed.*



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