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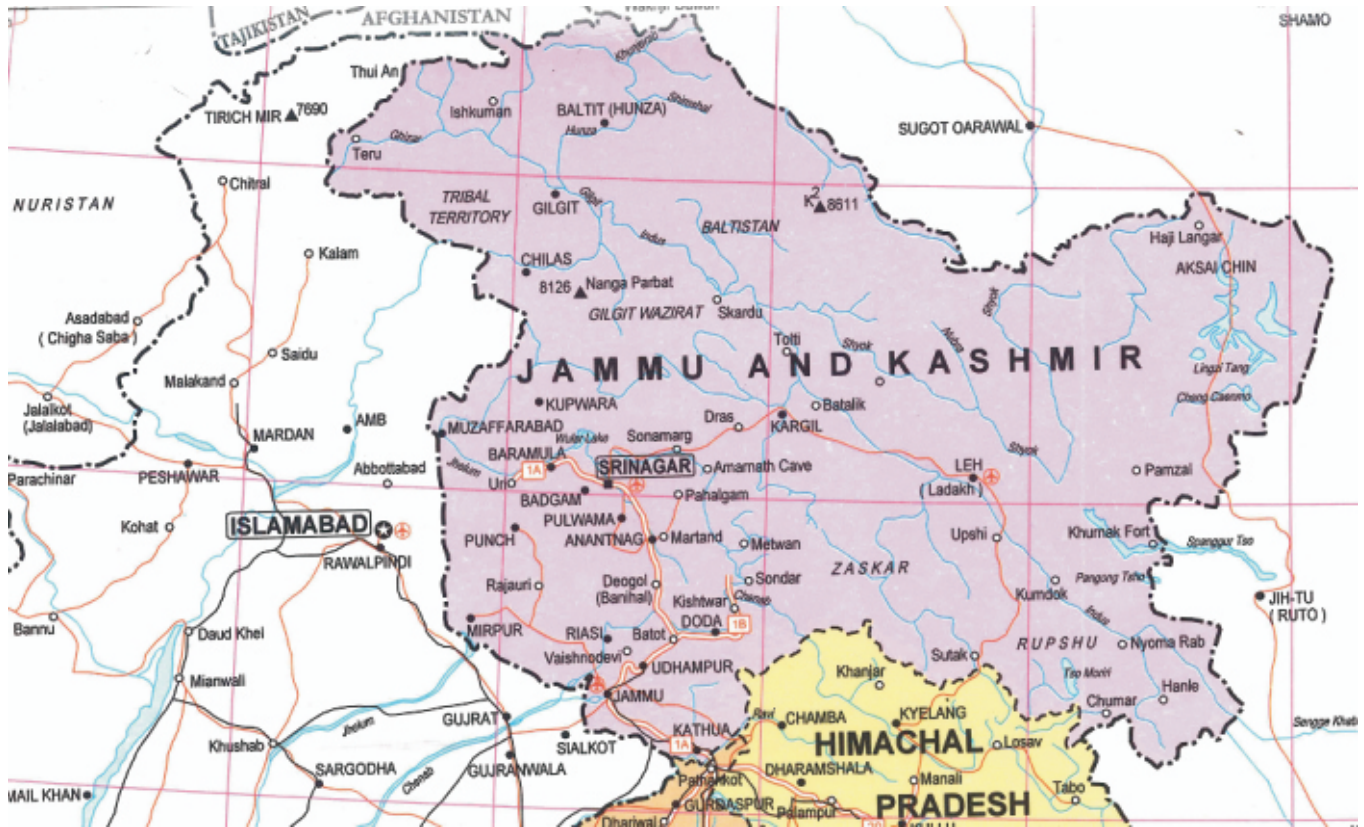
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Jammu & Kashmir

(Source: Based on the Survey of India Map, Govt of India 2000)

In this Edition

The New York Times article by Selig Harrison has generated an animated debate on the Chinese presence in PoK. Pakistan and China have denied troop presence even as India registered protest on Chinese forays into PoK. Eventually, China assured India that the troop presence was not military in nature and concerned only with flood relief activities. Nevertheless, Harrison's article highlighted the vulnerability of PoK to Chinese influence and the same time narrated recent developments which strengthen claims on Chinese inroads in PoK. It is indeed a welcome sign to see that a region which is far away from glare and attention has been brought back into focus by a report published in the west.

PoK which has been coping with the aftermath of a massive flood was also engulfed in sectarian violence. Normal life was disrupted as violence led to closure of shops and businesses. As one of the reports indicates, the primary cause for the disturbance is the demographic shift which has resulted from inflow of Sunnis from Pakistan in PoK, originally a Shia majority region.

There are positive signals in the Cross LoC trade and the trading figures between the two sides crossed Rs 300 crore mark. One of the reports included in the current issue under economic developments brings out interesting facts about the increasing demand of dry fruits from AJK in the J&K.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

Tariq Naqash, “JuD holds rally in Muzaffarabad”, September 30, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: The Jamaat ud Dawa (JuD) on September 29 said if the world did not take notice of the ongoing repression in Kashmir, no power on earth could stop Kashmiris from reverting to the armed struggle. “If the world does not take notice of the repression unleashed at Kashmiris, no power on earth can stop us from reverting to the armed struggle,” said Amir Hamza, a JuD leader.

“It's the last chance for the international community to settle Kashmir issue peacefully. If the armed struggle begins again, it will spill beyond the borders of Kashmir,” Hamza said while addressing a conference held under the aegis of Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Kashmir (TAK) an organization launched by JuD Pakistan “to provide a platform to all political and religious parties campaigning for Kashmir movement.”

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/Sep/30/jud-holds-rally-in-muzaffarabad-15.asp>

“Sectarian strife in Gilgit-Baltistan, courtesy Islamabad”, September 27, 2010

GILGIT-BALTISTAN: Roads wear a deserted look, shopping and business centres remain shut and attendance in government offices and schools stays thin. This is the situation in Gilgit Baltistan, which is facing sectarian strife. The root cause is the influx of Sunnis from Pakistan-essentially Pashtuns. Since the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto regime in the mid 1970s, Islamabad has been continuously encouraging sectarian polarization in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The situation worsened dramatically under General Zia-ul-Haq, when the military dictator encouraged cadres of the radical Sunni Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) to extend its activities to the Gilgit-Baltistan region. ISI-backed Sunni extremist organizations are now engaged in activities like bomb blasts and killings that provoke sectarian clashes.

http://in.news.yahoo.com/139/20100927/808/tnl-sectarian-strife-in-gilgit-baltistan_1.html

“Ground-breaking of Diامر-Basha dam next month: PMIC”, Associated Press of Pakistan, September 28, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Inspection Commission (PMIC) was informed on September 28 that the ground-breaking ceremony of mega water and power project of Diامر-Basha Dam would be held next month. A PMIC meeting was held with its Chairman Malik Amjad Ali Noon in the chair, which reviewed the pace of the progress of mega projects of Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) including Neelum Jehlum Hydel Power Project in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Rainee Canal project in Sindh.

http://ftpapp.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=117439&Itemid=1

“AJK ex-PM calls for fresh polls, APC on Kashmir”, The Nation, September 28, 2010

LAHORE: As the game of musical chairs is going on in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir, its former Prime Minister Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry called for fresh free and fair polls to bring in a stable government, and has said international observers will be invited for monitoring elections.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Lahore/28-Sep-2010/AJK-exPM-calls-for-fresh-polls-APC-on-Kashmir>

“AJK government to create job opportunities”, Business Recorder, September 28, 2010

MIRPUR: In order to overcome the unemployment problem faced by youth, especially the educated class, on permanent grounds, the AJK government chalked out a broad-based plan to create employment opportunities, official sources stated.

The sources told newsmen on September 27 that various elaborated steps were proposed to be taken

to create more job opportunities in public and private sector by launching a broad-based micro-credit scheme to extend soft term loans to the jobless educated youth, so that they could set up their own businesses.

<http://beta.brecorder.com/section/37/1/1106591:ajk-government-to-create-job-opportunities.html>

“Chinese presence in Gilgit-Baltistan”, Business Recorder, September 27, 2010

There appears to be a growing concern in the international media about the Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan. This concern stems from the presence of Chinese workers in the region. The apprehension is based on multiple factual inconsistencies and highly erroneous reasoning. The argument put forward by the columnists in certain international newspapers is that while the world powers are busy helping Pakistan recover from the disastrous floods, there is an increased Chinese activity in Gilgit-Baltistan region, which must be closely monitored.

<http://www.brecorder.com/section/69/1/1106377:chinese-presence-in-gilgit-baltistan.html>

Shabir Choudhry, “So called Azad Kashmir and security zone”, September 23, 2010

Presentation made by Abbas Butt on behalf of Kashmir National Party in a seminar arranged by NGO at the UN Human Rights Council Geneva on 22 September 2010 on 'So called Azad Kashmir and security zone'. This area of the former State of Jammu and Kashmir is occupied by Pakistan, and it is called Azad Kashmir, which means free or independent. Reality, however, is that this area is not free or independent. It is a colony of Pakistan and Pakistan exploits resources of this area, just like imperialist powers of the 18th and 19th century did with their colonies.

From among the Kashmiri collaborators, Pakistan selects those people who are best to serve their interests and keep control over the people. Pakistan and these puppets use name of religion to keep control over the people and spread extremism and hatred.

This area appears to have a Parliamentary democracy, but those who disagree with policies of Islamabad and promote united and independent Jammu and Kashmir are not allowed to contest elections. Pakistani politicians and Pakistani secret agencies decide who can contest and who will win the elections.

All those who become members of the Assembly are pro Pakistan and subservient of Pakistan, but Islamabad still does not trust them. They have set up Kashmir Council which is always chaired by Pakistani Prime Minister or Chief Executive when Islamabad is ruled by a dictator.

http://www.international.to/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=750:so-called-azad-kashmir-and-security-zone&catid=48:dr-shabir-choudhry&Itemid=79

B.Raman, “Flood Relief: Chinese focus on Gilgit-Baltistan & Sindh”, Sri Lanka Guardian, September 26, 2010

The Chinese authorities have been highlighting two path-breaking aspects of their assistance for flood relief to Pakistan, which started on August 1, 2010, and continues since then. The first is the value of the assistance, which has already reached US \$ 250 million (pledges plus actuals). This includes a sum of US \$ 200 million pledged by Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, in his address to the UN General Assembly in New York on September 22. According to Chinese officials, this is the largest humanitarian relief commitment overseas ever made by China. The second is the deployment of humanitarian relief teams by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) for assisting the Pakistani army in its aid efforts. According to Chinese officials, this is the first time that the PLA's specially-trained disaster relief teams have been deployed abroad in large numbers. The PLA has deployed three teams---two in Sindh and one in Gilgit-Baltistan.

<http://www.srilankaguardian.org/2010/09/flood-relief-chinese-focus-on-gilgit.html>

“Attabad rehabilitation put on fast track”, Tribune, September 25, 2010

GILGIT: Federal Minister for Kashmir affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Arbab Alamgir said on September

24 that the rehabilitation of Attabad Lake victims would be speeded up as the situation has normalised following the flood. The federal minister said this to a Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) delegation, headed by acting governor of G-B Wazir Baig, who called on him in Islamabad on September 24 stated “The floods had diverted our attention, but now we will focus on the rehabilitation of Attabad Lake victims and the up gradation of the Karakoram Highway (KKH),” Arbab Alamgir was quoted as stating.

A massive landslide early this year blocked Hunza River, forming a lake that expanded beyond 23 kilometers as water accumulated in it over the months. Five villages upstream were submerged, leaving nearly 5,000 people homeless. More than 25,000 people in upper Hunza also got stranded as the road linking Gojal was washed away by the landslide.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/54354/attabad-rehabilitation-put-on-fast-track/>

<http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2010/sep/24/baltistan-hindu-kush-road-trip/?printpage=true#>

“Aid distribution through bureaucracy opposed”, Tribune, September 30, 2010

GILGIT: Lawmakers in the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly on September 29 voiced dissatisfaction over the distribution of relief goods among the flood victims through district government officials, saying that the distribution should be carried out through area representatives. “The distribution shouldn't be done through bureaucrats, but through elected representatives of the respective areas,” Amna Ansari, a Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid lawmaker from Skardu, stated in the assembly.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/56515/aid-distribution-through-bureaucracy-opposed/>

Jaswant Singh, “The Great Game's New Players”, September 24, 2010

NEW DELHI : Two “great games” currently roil South Asia. In the West, Afghanistan and what Henry Kissinger calls “Islamist Jihadists” challenges the international order. In the East, a large number of Chinese troops have entered

Pakistani-held territory high in the mountain fastness of the Kashmir Karakorams, in the picturesque Gilgit-Baltistan region, not far from the glacial battlefield of Siachen, where India and Pakistan confront each other.

Senge Hasan Sering, from Skardu, the director of the Gilgit-Baltistan National Congress, believes that the number of Chinese People's Liberation Army troops now present “could be over 11, 000,” as there are also additional “PLA construction corps personnel” deployed. It is here that China is currently investing “billions of dollars in mega projects like expressways, tunnels, and oil and gas pipelines.” This, Sering says, is “surely not on account of any overflowing altruism.”

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/singh6/English>

“Meeting of OIC Contact Group on AJK held”, September 24, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir met on the sidelines of the 65th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York on September 23. Chaired by OIC Secretary General Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the meeting was attended by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Foreign Minister of Turkey and senior representatives from Saudi Arabia and Niger. Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan, Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir also attended the meeting as stated in a press. In his remarks, the Secretary General expressed OIC's strong solidarity with the Kashmir cause.

<http://www.sananews.net/english/2010/09/24/meeting-of-oic-contact-group-on-ajk-held/>

Hameed Shaheen, “Attique meets FM”, Pakistan Observer

NEW YORK: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir met with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi in New York. Both the AJK Premier and the Foreign Minister were participating in the 38th meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers Contact Group on Kashmir.

Foreign Minister Qureshi assured the AJK Premier that Kashmiri leaders in both parts of the state would be taken into confidence regarding any future course of action before holding talks with India on Jammu and Kashmir. Senior officials of foreign office of Pakistan were also present in the meeting. Dr G N Fai Chairman Kashmiri-American Council was also present on the occasion.

Qureshi said that he would soon start a new round of consultation with the Kashmiri leaders of both sides. Whenever any talk with India over Kashmir takes place, that would be picked up from where dropped in the past, he further added.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=53738>

Zhang Jin, “Chinese Army Helicopters Arrive in Pakistan”, Xinhua, September 22, 2010

A Chinese military Mi-17 helicopter is seen at an air base in Rawalpindi, near Islamabad, Pakistan, Sept. 22, 2010. Four Chinese military helicopters, taking off on September 21 from northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, arrived in Pakistan September 22 to assist in flood relief work. Four Chinese military helicopters landed in Pakistani capital Islamabad for a stopover before heading south to the flood-hit Sindh province for relief efforts. The helicopters took off from northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and arrived in northern Pakistan's Gilgit on September 21.

Along with the four helicopters, the Central Military Commission of China has dispatched 64 rescue personnel to Pakistan. Receiving them at the Benazir Bhutto International Airport, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Liu Jian said that it is the very first time Chinese military helicopters have been sent overseas on a humanitarian mission.

<http://english.cri.cn/6909/2010/09/22/1461s595822.htm>

“Speaker GB assembly sworn in as Acting Governor”

ISLAMABAD: Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Assembly, Wazir Baig was sworn in as Acting Governor GB by Justice Muhammad Nawaz Abbasi, Chief Judge Supreme Elite Court of GB. An

oath taking ceremony was held on in GB House in which Chief Minister, Syed Mehdi Shah including cabinet and assembly members participated. In his message, Acting Governor said, “I would try my level best to perform my duties in an effective way. The People of GB should play a vital role for prosperity and development”. The seat of Governor had been vacant after death of Dr. Shama Khalid.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=168845>

Hameed Shaheen, “UK MP meets Attique”

LONDON: British MP Mr Jasson indicated to the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir here on Monday that he planned to visit Pakistan/AJK soon to assess the needs of flood affectees there. The AJK Premier thanked the British MP and told him that he would find government cooperation readily available to him during his planned visit. A doctors team also called on the AJK Prime Minister and assured him of their medical role in the flood hit zones in AJK/Pakistan. The doctors thanked the Prime Minister for awarding free of cost land for establishment of a school for the blind in Mirpur. The school is now fully functional.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=53261>

“People from Gilgit-Baltistan hold Eid get-together in New York”, Pamir Times, September 19, 2010

NEW YORK: Sohni Watan Gilgit-Baltistan, a cultural forum in New York organized an Eid get together for the people from GB residing in New York City. The event took place in Queens, New York. Malka Baltistani and Dr. Maqsood Jaafri Political Advisor of President Zardari on Kashmir Affaris were the chief guests on the occasion. Addressing the gathering Dr. Jafferri said, “Gilgit-Baltistan is a unique place on earth due to its scenic beauty and its immaculate people. My association with GB and its people is more than two decades”.

<http://pamirtimes.net/2010/09/19/people-from-gilgit-baltistan-hold-eid-get-together-in-new-york/>

“China makes huge inroads in PoK”, Times Now, September 19, 2010

China's duplicity now stands exposed. Almost a

fortnight after reports of presence of Chinese troops in Pak occupied Kashmir. It is reported as many as 122 Chinese companies are funding 14 mega infrastructure projects. Days after reports of presence of Chinese troops in Gilgit Baltistan alarmed India, accessed documents have listed China's investments in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). The proof exposes the fact that China is pumping in billions of dollars, funding 14 mega infrastructure projects in the Gilgit Baltistan region -- a territory that belongs to India.

<http://www.timesnow.tv/China-makes-huge-inroads-in-PoK/articleshow/4354132.cms>

“US Army aircraft makes emergency landing at Benazir Airport”, Regional Times, September 18, 2010

ISLAMABAD: A US military aircraft made an emergency landing at the Benazir International Airport on September 17 evening averting a possible disaster as all the passengers remained safe. According to the sources, the C-17 aircraft of US army employed for relief missions in the flood hit areas of the country was returning to Islamabad from Gilgit with around 176 passengers onboard developed some technical fault while landing at the airport.

However, the aircraft landed safely at the airport causing no damage to life or property, the sources added. The passengers in the aircraft had been stranded in the recent flood in the adjoining areas of Gilgit.

<http://regionaltimes.com/18sep2010/frontpagenews/usarmy.htm>

“Speakers flay Pak, AJK role towards Kashmir cause”, The Nation, September 18, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a seminar organised here on September 17 categorically slammed the passive role played by the governments of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir towards Kashmir cause. It was clearly reflected through the seminar titled “Kashmir issue and our responsibilities” that all the stakeholders comprising the leaderships of J&K, AJK and Pakistan, were not on the same page and had some serious differences which they openly

shared during the occasion.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Islamabad/18-Sep-2010/Speakers-flay-Pak-AJK-role-towards-Kashmir-cause>

“Pakistan has ceded Gilgit-Baltistan to China”, TibetanReview.net, September 11, 2010

Selig Harrison, director of the Asia Program at the Center for International Policy, who had earlier said in an op-ed in the New York Times August 26 that up to 11,000 Chinese troops were stationed in Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan occupied Kashmir has admitted that China had not deployed combat soldiers there. But he has insisted that Islamabad has ceded control of the area to Beijing despite denials from both sides. He was quoted as saying: "there has been an influx of construction, engineering and communication units of the People's Liberation Army into Gilgit-Baltistan, under the command of the Xinjiang military district, totaling at least 7,000 military personnel." He was also quoted as saying: "In addition, several thousand PLA troops are said to be stationed in the Khunjerab Pass on the Xinjiang border to protect Karakoram Highway construction crews, with ready access to Gilgit-Baltistan." Harrison had no doubt about that all this meant. "the impact of such a large foreign presence in a thinly populated, undeveloped region has been profound...To local political activists, this adds up to a creeping process of de facto Chinese control over a region where Islamabad claims nominal authority but lacks the infrastructure to exercise it."

<http://www.tibetanreview.net/news.php?id=7188>

“Governor Gilgit-Baltistan passes away”, Pakistan Times

ISLAMABAD: Shama Khalid, the first woman Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan passed away in Islamabad. Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Mehdi Shah confirmed the news while Information Minister Qamar Zaman Kaira also confirming it, expressed condolence. She was suffering from cancer and was admitted in a hospital here. Shama Khalid, who took oath of Governor Gilgit-Baltistan on March 23, 2010, rendered a number of valuable

services in the department of women's health.

<http://www.pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=14689>

Tariq Naqash/Roshan Mughal, "AJK PM calls for rallies on Friday Former militants call for strike on Saturday", September 15, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: The AJK Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan on September 15 called upon the people of Pakistan and AJK as well as the Pakistani and Kashmiri expatriates across the world to stage protest rallies and demonstrations on Friday to condemn the reign of terror let loose in Jammu and Kashmir. Separately, a group of former Kashmiri militants and Kashmir refugees, however, urged the residents of Muzaffarabad to observe a total wheel jam and shutter down strike on Saturday to express 'support and solidarity' with the valiant Kashmiris braving the worst ever repression of their history.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/Sep/16/ajk-pm-calls-for-rallies-on-friday-10.asp>

"Breathing down our neck", Hindustan Times, September 16, 2010

Director of the Asia Programme at the Centre for International Policy Selig H. Harrison's report on the recent deployment of Chinese troops in the Gilgit region of Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) has caused concern in South Asia. By way of denial, Pakistan and China haven't refuted the presence of the troops but their purpose. Pakistan claims they were there to assist in "flood control". Zhao Gang Cheng of the Shanghai-based Institute of International Studies stated that the purpose was for considerations of economy and energy and not to pose a threat to anyone.

The Chinese are conscious of the vulnerability of their Sea Line of Communications (SLOC) to disruption by any hostile navy in the event of a conflict. China's dependence on imported oil is now to the tune of 56 per cent. A key component of this strategy hinges upon its investment in the Gwadar Port of Pakistan and the frenzied construction/upgradation of a triple-tier rail and road highway along with a gas pipeline that will

carry Iranian gas to China's Western Provinces. This will reduce a 16,500-km journey to just 2,500 km. This Chinese oil and gas artery via Pakistan and the Shia rebellious province of Gilgit in PoK has become a core Chinese interest.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/Breathing-down-our-neck/Article1-601011.aspx>

"China retracts its controversial Gilgit-Baltistan", TibetanReview.net, September 6, 2010

In a rare apparent act of responding positively, even if tacitly, to a loud protest from India, China has quietly dropped its reference to the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan region as "a northern part of Pakistan", according to reports. The report said the Chinese government had withdrawn its statement from its official Xinhua news agency as well as from its Foreign Ministry's website.

The link to the Xinhua statement, which was contained in an item headlined "China refutes reports of sending troops to Pakistan," did not open, the report stated. Likewise, the report said the Chinese Foreign Ministry, which in a regular briefing on September 2 had repeated the reference to Gilgit-Baltistan "as a northern part of Pakistan" in response to a question on the presence of Chinese troops there, had deleted records of both the question and its response from its official transcript, which was posted on its website on September 3.

<http://www.tibetanreview.net/news.php?id=7130&>

"No Chinese troops in Gilgit, claims Pak's envoy to Beijing", Indian Express, September 1, 2010

Rejecting as "fabricated" reports of presence of up to 11,000 Chinese troops in PoK's Gilgit-Baltistan area, Pakistan's envoy in Beijing has claimed that only a "humanitarian team" from China was in the region to assist the flood victims. "The story is not true and totally fabricated," Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Masood Khan stated.

He was referring to a New York Times report which said that about 7,000 to 11,000 Chinese troops were deployed in the strategic Gilgit-Baltistan region,

where Pakistan faced a state of rebellion from the local people.

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/chauhan/675846/>

Shabbir Mir, “Gilgit-Baltistan CM's 'friend' bursts the bubble”, Tribune, September 14, 2010

GILGIT: Adviser to the Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Mohammad Nasir accused his own government of nepotism and corruption which is taking place “under the nose” of CM Mehdi Shah.

“Shah knows everything but has shut his eyes,” Nasir noted in Gilgit. “Cabinet members are making money through illegal means but nobody is willing to stop this practice,” he further noted. When asked to explain his allegation, Nasir said that everyone is aware of what was going on.

“Nepotism is common. All the members of his cabinet have become ministers by means of money,” he said. Nasir said that Gilgit-Baltistan was being divided along linguistic lines. He was referring to the chief minister who hails from Skardu and some other members who hold key portfolios also belong to the same region.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/49576/gilgit-baltistan-cm%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%98friend%E2%80%99-bursts-the-bubble/>

“Failed suicide attack kills bomber in Pakistan's Kashmir”, AFP, September 12, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: A man blew himself up in a botched suicide bombing on September 12 in Pakistani-administered Kashmir, an official stated. The bomber's explosives went off as he was heading to a target in Rawalakot district, 120 kilometres (74 miles) south of regional capital Muzaffarabad.

"The bomber was trying to hit some sensitive installations but the explosive went off before time, when he was on his way to hit his target," an administrative official in Rawalakot. He said the bomber was identified as a local resident.

Attacks blamed mostly on the Taliban have killed more than 3,700 people across Pakistan since July 2007, concentrated in the northwest and major cities

rather than the northern mountains and eastern border with India.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g136pKITAvt84ExSJjuzZI6l9tVw>

“Bilal trained in Pakistan's Muzaffarabad, Lahore: ATS”, The Hindu, September 10, 2010

Germany Bakery blast accused Sheikh Lalbaba Md Hussain alias Bilal received advanced terror training from the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Pakistan's Muzaffarabad and Lahore, the Maharashtra ATS stated.

“Bilal had been to Pakistan in between January 2008 and January 2010. During this period, he received terror training organised by LeT in Muzaffarabad and Lahore,” an ATS official noted. Bilal had undergone advanced training including handling of sophisticated weapons and bomb making techniques. During these two years, he had even sneaked into the country through the Bangladesh and Nepal borders thrice, the official further noted.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article625228.ece>

Interview with Senge Hasnan Sering, “Pakistan, China must leave Gilgit-Baltistan”

Gilgit-Baltistan is part of the former Princely State of Jammu & Kashmir, and we have been affected deeply by the unresolved issue. As a cultural and human rights defender, I have great interest in the Kashmir issue. The interest also stems from the fact that the Sufis and Shias of Gilgit-Baltistan share religious ties with Kashmiris and Ladakhis. Ethnically and linguistically, the people of Baltistan are related to the Ladakhis while the people of Gilgit, Chitral and Kashmir are Dardic, who speak related languages. All our historical trade routes open towards Ladakh, Kashmir and Tibet. Kashmir and Tibet gave us civilization, which is now plagued by violence, extremism and drug culture introduced by Pakistanis.

We want to re-establish relations with other parts of Jammu & Kashmir to revive our social values and traditions. The socio-economic development of

Gilgit-Baltistan is something that every citizen of the region, including myself, aspires for. We believe that opening of the Line of Control and resumption of trade over the historical trade routes between Gilgit-Baltistan and Ladakh are critical for alleviating economic hardships, especially in the districts of Astore, Skardo, Kharmang, Gangche and Shingo-Shigar. Hence, resuming links with Kashmir will help solve both socio-political as well as economic problems of Gilgit-Baltistan.

<http://sify.com/news/pakistan-china-must-leave-gilgit-baltistan-imagegallery-national-kjiws7cdfac.html>

“BNF chief endorses Harrison's comment on aggressive Chinese intent in Gilgit-Baltistan”, ANI, September 7, 2010

BRUSSELS: Balwaristan National Front chairman, Abdul Hamid Khan praised and endorsed views aired by noted American expert on South Asian affairs Selig Harrison vis-'-vis China's gradual attempt to establish a presence in Pakistan's northern borderlands. Responding to Harrison's August 26 article in the New York Times, in which he says China wants a grip on the region to assure unfettered road and rail access to the Gulf through Pakistan, Khan accuses China of being "the first occupier, even before Pakistan, of thousands acres of our land of Hunza by manipulating the then British Empire."

According to Harrison, it takes 16 to 25 days for Chinese oil tankers to reach the Gulf. When high-speed rail and road links through Gilgit and Baltistan are completed, China will be able to transport cargo from Eastern China to the new Chinese-built Pakistani naval bases at Gwadar, Pasni and Ormara, just east of the Gulf, within 48 hours.

<http://news.oneindia.in/2010/09/07/bnfchief-endorses-harrisons-comment-on-aggressivechi.html>

Randeep Ramesh, “What are Chinese troops doing in Kashmir?”, September 6, 2010

The claim that more than 7,000 Chinese troops have been handed “de facto control” of Gilgit-Baltistan, a northern part of Kashmir, by Islamabad, has set

alarm bells ringing in Delhi. India which, like its nuclear-armed rival Pakistan, claims the entire state has long been worried that the People's Liberation Army was working on roads and railway projects in the Karakoram mountains.

What is true is that China plans a massive highway linking western China to the port it is building at Gwadar, Pakistan, on the shore of the Arabian Sea. The benefits are obvious: the journey time from factory gate in, say, China's wild west, to container ships bound for the Gulf will be cut from weeks to a few days. Eventually it may even become a key energy supply route.

All of this troubles Delhi, which has long asked for China to keep its nose out of Kashmiri affairs. However, the rise of the Middle Kingdom and its need to secure passage through its own troublesome provinces of Xinjiang and Tibet through to Pakistan make this unlikely. But India suspects, too, that China is intent on becoming the hegemon of much of the eastern hemisphere able to dictate to smaller powers the rules of the game.

<http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/views/125576-what-are-chinese-troops-doing-in-kashmir.html>

Shabbir Mir, “Sectarian clashes cloud devastation”, The Express Tribune, September 5, 2010

GILGIT: Gilgit was still reeling from the devastation caused by the floods when it was engulfed by sectarianism, which has diverted attention away from relief and rehabilitation needs. Police, rangers and even the army was, at times, pulled back from flood-stricken areas and re-deployed to Gilgit to quell the violence that had left four people dead in 24 hours during mid-August. The government, headed by the chief minister, focused on violence in an attempt to 'nip the evil in the bud', instead of highlighting the severity of flood destruction. The floods and landslides have killed nearly 200 people in Gilgit-Baltistan. But the media has concentrated on violence rather than the miseries of the people on the verge of starvation. Already paralysed due to lack of fuel and food, the threat of ambush from rival sects has further

curtailed people's movements.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/46758/sectarian-clashes-cloud-devastation/>

Sikander Shaheen, “Another crisis brewing up for AJK LA”, The Nation, September 5, 2010

ISLAMABAD: A mega political crisis lies in store for Azad Jammu and Kashmir, as Pakistan-sponsored power politics is in the full swing in AJK. Former Prime Minister AJK Raja Farooq Haider repeatedly accused Pakistani Government of “plotting evil conspiracies against democratic setup of AJK.” Farooq Haider and former speaker AJK Legislative Assembly, Shah Ghulam Qadir have kept alleging that AJK Government was trying to abolish the administrative character of AJK by co-opting allocated refugees' seats of AJK Legislative Assembly in Pakistan with those of reserved seats, with the support of Pakistani Government. Sardar Attique-led ruling Muslim Conference has also been blamed for conspiring to dissolve the existing Assembly after co-option of the refugees' seats to block PML-N's inroads in AJK.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/05-Sep-2010/Another-crisis-brewing-up-for-AJK-LA>

“No houses to be raided without agencies' approval”, Tribune, September 4, 2010

GILGIT: Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Mehdi Shah stated on September 3 that raids will be carried out on suspected houses upon the recommendation of one of the three main agencies. “If any of the spy agencies differ on a house, raids on that particular house will not be conducted.

Ever since sectarian violence struck Gilgit, police and other paramilitary forces have been conducting raids on houses to arrest troublemakers and recover illegal arms and ammunition. A huge cache of arms and ammunition was recovered from Nagral, Barmas and the Basin areas following raids.

Though Shah did not disclose the names of the secret agencies conducting the raids, other sources said that at least three main intelligence agencies have been authorised by the government to begin a

covert investigation into violence that left at least four people dead.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/46374/no-houses-to-be-raided-without-agencies%E2%80%99-approval/>

Ananth Krishnan, “India conveys concerns to China”, The Hindu, September 4, 2010

BEIJING: India on September 3 conveyed its concerns to China over what officials described as “a pattern of what China was doing” in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, also raising questions over reports that 11,000 Chinese troops were present in the disputed region.

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Zhijun assured Indian officials in talks that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops that were present in the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan region were only stationed there for flood relief work and to provide humanitarian assistance.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry on September 2 described the New York Times opinion piece which claimed that Pakistan had “handed over” control of the disputed region in PoK to China as “totally groundless and out of ulterior motive.”

<http://www.hindu.com/2010/09/04/stories/2010090454631400.htm>

“China Gilgit Gambit is Strategic Says Expert”, Hindustan Times, September 2, 2010

EXCERPT: "China has massive presence in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, said a US-based activist from Gilgit who added that massive investments were made by Beijing in that frontier region to expand the Karakoram Corridor as a strategic pathway. Washington-based political activist Senge H. Sering, a former visiting fellow at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), warned the Indian government about the Chinese presence over the years in Pakistani Kashmir. Sering has spoken about massive investments made by China in the frontier region to expand the Karakoram Corridor as a strategic pathway to the sea lanes linking to West Asia. Highlighting the multifaceted character of Chinese presence in the Gilgit-Baltistan province, Sering

said China-Pakistan cooperation in the corridor includes expansion of the Karakoram Highway (KH), construction of a parallel railway line as well as oil and gas pipelines, which will give China rapid connectivity to Pakistani ports lying in the gateway to the Strait of Hormuz and Suez Canal. The region's close proximity to Afghanistan, Tajikistan and India, in addition to Tibet and Xinjiang, gives China diplomatic, strategic, logistical and political gains, he noted”.

<http://www.pakistanconflictmonitor.org/2010/09/china-gilgit-gambit-is-strategic-says-expert.html>

Ali Rinchen, “Gilgit-Baltistan: Six decades of plunder”, September 3, 2010

The story of Gilgit-Baltistan is that of a free nation which went into Pakistani occupation soon after her people failed to sustain control over the land and its resources. The story of occupation starts in the fall of 1947, just a few weeks after local soldiers revolted against the Dogras (Ghurkas) and ousted forces loyal to the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir. The region was declared a free republic. Fearing reprisals from the Dogra forces, the local military command asked Pakistan to provide diplomatic support. Pakistan didn't waste much time advancing her political agenda in the region. Within a few weeks, Pakistani forces entered the region and established direct control over Gilgit-Baltistan. It is the strategic location of Gilgit-Baltistan, situated between Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and India, which makes her a prize worth fighting for. Gilgit-Baltistan has a history of thousands of years of colonial and imperial forces using her ravines as a battlefield. Sixty-three years since the Pakistani occupation began, the picture is no different.

<http://nation.ittefaq.com/issues/2010/09/03/news0449.htm>

Ananth Krishnan, “No troops deployed in Gilgit-Baltistan, says China”, The Hindu, September 3, 2010

BEIJING: China on September 2 denied the presence of its troops in Gilgit-Baltistan, but voiced support to Islamabad's claims on the disputed region by describing it in a statement as “a northern part of Pakistan.” India views the region as an

integral part of Jammu and Kashmir that is under illegal occupation. China has, in the past, refrained from voicing its support to either Indian or Pakistani claims to the disputed region.

The Foreign Ministry here stated. “We believe the attempts of some people to fabricate stories to provoke China-Pakistan or China-India relations are doomed to fail.”

<http://www.hindu.com/2010/09/03/stories/2010090355311400.htm>

B. Raman, “Who Cares For Gilgit-Baltistan?”, Outlook, September 2, 2010

Islamabad was in panic that India might make a humanitarian intervention on the ground that it is Indian territory. We did not even open our mouth. Can we blame Beijing if the people of the area start looking up to China? The Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) area of Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) was one of the first and worst to be affected by the floods caused by the recent monsoon and breaches of dams and water reservoirs in Pakistan. The damages spread from there to other parts of Pakistan. The devastation caused by flash floods in GB preceded that in Ladakh and was even worse. Finding that the Pakistan government was unable and unwilling because of the floods in other areas to come to the help of the people of GB, local nationalist organizations sent out SOS messages to India and the other members of the international community to help them. These messages started coming in from the second week of August.

In a direct appeal to the international community, Mr Abdul Hamid Khan of the Balawaristan National Front of GB stated as follows:

“over 500 people have lost their lives whereas, more than half a million have become homeless and nearly 50,000 families have completely lost everything, including land, shelter, livestock and all means of living”.

In a statement disseminated from Skardu, Mr Manzoor Hussain Parwana, the Chairman of the Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement (GBUM) demanded that the Indian aid coming for relief

victims should also be shared with the people of Gilgit Baltistan. He also demanded that the Kargil-Skardu and the Astore-Srinagar roads should be opened immediately to provide relief to the local people. He requested the international community to play a greater role in providing relief to the flood victims of GB. He said:

“The region is cut off from the rest of the world for the last 20 days due to flashfloods and landslides. Commodity and food prices have skyrocketed and causing famine like situation. Many villages have been flattened. Lack of medicines has caused endemic diseases in the region. GB is a disputed territory under Pakistani administration. Given the circumstances, the international community and especially neighbouring countries have to enhance their direct influence in the relief work.” He further said that the current puppet government of GB had failed to repair the road network.

<http://www.outlookindia.com/printarticle.aspx?266985>

“Pak army guards LeT training camps”, Headlines Today, September 1, 2010

Terror training camps of the Lashkar-e-Taiba in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) are being guarded by the Pakistan Army. Images show army posts and trucks around the secluded jungle camps. Experts say the Pakistan Army has been deployed at these terror camps not only to supervise the training of the terrorists but to ensure that they don't venture into Pakistani cities and resort to looting and extortion.

In the images, an army truck is seen carrying soldiers, arms and ammunition right outside the Shawai Nullah camp in Muzaffarabad. Sentry pickets are seen at the Jangal Mangal terror camp in Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At the Baitul-Ikram camp in Muzaffarabad, the terrorists are allowed free use of international funds and equipment such as UNDP gensets.

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/111101/India/pak-army-guards-let-training-camps.html>

“Pakistan denies giving de-facto control of Gilgit Baltistan to China”, ANI, September 1, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly denied handing over de-facto control of the strategic Gilgit-Baltistan region in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) to China. The New York Times reported that there was a simmering rebellion against Pakistani rule and on the invitation of the Pakistani government, 'seven to eleven thousand' Chinese soldiers had entered Gilgit-Baltistan area. The Pakistan Foreign Office strongly denied the news being circulated in the American and Indian media, claiming that 'Gilgit-Baltistan' region had been handed over to China, on August 31.

"The Chinese were working on landslide, flood hit areas and on the destroyed Korakoram Highway with the permission of Pakistani Government," the Dawn quoted Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit, as stating.

<http://news.oneindia.in/2010/09/01/pakistandenies-giving-de-facto-control-of-gilgit-baltistan.html>

Economic Developments

“AJK taxation dept workers go on strike”, September 22, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: The non-gazetted staff of the AJK income tax, excise and sales tax department went on indefinite pen-down strike in the southern lakeside city of Mirpur on September 21 in protest against the alleged out of merit induction on deputation of a non-gazetted official of the Federal Board of Revenue against a gazetted post.

The protesting employees, who were wearing black armbands, shouted slogans during a demonstration they staged to express indignation against the Islamabad-based bosses of the AJK Council, which controls the AJK income tax, excise and sales tax department.

According to them, the AJK Council secretariat had inducted one Mohammad Iqbal, a BPS-14 official of the FBR, as the Assistant Commissioner Income Tax, Circle-12, (professional), Mirpur, in BPS-17, “in violation of service rules and regulations related to the promotions of the local employees of the department.”

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/local/islamabad/ajk-taxation-dept-workers-go-on-strike-290>

“Tax officials strike in AJK fails”, The Nation, September 24, 2010

ISLAMABAD: A spokesman of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council Secretariat noted that the strike call by an unregistered association, recently formed on behest of senior Acting Additional Commissioners by some Income Tax Employees in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, had failed. The strike was unsuccessful because some of the office bearers did not take part in it, the spokesman added. The spokesman said, “It is not correct that the Council Secretariat inducted Muhammad Iqbal, an official of FBR as Assistant Commissioner. In fact, Muhammad Iqbal has only been posted as Taxation

Officer. Earlier, he was working in the Council against BS-16 post on current charge basis.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Islamabad/24-Sep-2010/Tax-officials-strike-in-AJK-fails>

“Cross-LoC trade picks up momentum”, Pakistan Tribune, September 15, 2010

MIRPUR: Cross-LoC trade on Poonch-Rawalakot route between Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Indian occupied Kashmir has been picking up pace from the last several weeks due to high demand for dates and other dry fruits, a report on September 14 from across the LoC stated.

Pakistan-origin dates have been on high demand in the occupied Kashmir during Ramazan and were being imported in bulk from the AJK by the Kashmiri traders, it noted, adding that a couple of weeks ago, the demand for potatoes and tomatoes was high in the AJK due to washing away of crops in flash floods.

<http://paktribune.com/news/index.shtml?231559>

“Demand for AJK dry fruits in J&K increases manifold”, Kashmir Media Service, September 7, 2010

SRINAGAR: In occupied Kashmir, the demand for dry fruits in the Valley has increased manifold with the traders importing huge quantities from Azad Jammu and Kashmir through the Line of Control.

The officials at Trade Facilitation Centre, Salamabad, Uri, stated that the demand for dry fruits in the occupied territory had picked up in view of the forthcoming wedding season. “This week dry fruits, especially dates, constituted the major chunk of exports from Pakistan,” stated an official at the TFC.

He said that 2,867 quintals of dry fruits worth Rs 3.175 crore were imported in 39 truckloads from the Chakoti Trade Centre, AJK, during two-day trade

adding that over 90 per cent of the imported items comprised dry fruits alone, with dry dates forming the major part in the preceding week.

<http://www.kmsnews.org/news/demand-ajk-dry-fruits-ihk-increases-manifold>

“Plan inked to boost agri sector”, Pakistan Observer

MIRPUR: The AJK government had inked a plan to boost the agriculture sector on latest lines under the spirit of the government's popular vision of “skilled and green Kashmir”, AJK Minister for Agriculture and AKLASC Khan Majid Khan stated. He was talking to newsmen at the Kashmir press club in Mirpur. The minister revealed that colossal funds were being placed in AJK's next fiscal year budget to achieve the development targets set for the promotion of agriculture sector.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=53821>

“BISP to provide Rs 327Mln for flood-hit areas of Gilgit-Baltistan”, Pakistan Times

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister and Chairperson BISP Ms Farzana Raja stated that relief under BISP's Emergency Relief Package is being provided in all flood hit areas across the country.

She said, the poor victims of flood in the Gilgit Baltistan deserve equal attention and BISP has responded to their needs on immediate basis. She said this while talking to Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan, Syed Mehdi Shah, at BISP Secretariat.

<http://www.pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=14528>

Rabia Noor, “Intra-Kashmir trade crosses Rs 300 cr mark”, September 10, 2010

SRINAGAR: Marking yet another milestone, the trans-LoC trade via Uri-Muzaffarabad route

crossed Rs 300 crore mark. Officials at Trade Facilitation Centre Salamabad, Uri, noted that the intra-Kashmir trade reached Rs 300.34 crore on September 7, when goods worth Rs 6.9 crore were exchanged between the two divided parts of Kashmir.

Till date, 132 sessions of the trade have been carried out since the initiation of the trade. “Since the start of the trade in October 2008, goods worth Rs 122.45 crore have been exported from Kashmir Valley to PoK, while commodities valuing Rs 177.89 crore have been imported from the other side,” said Muhammad Ashraf Wani, Trade Facilitation Officer Salamabad.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/Sep/11/intra-kashmir-trade-crosses-rs-300-cr-mark-31.asp>

“G-B to demand Rs12 billion for rehabilitation”, Tribune, September 6, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The Gilgit-Baltistan government will demand Rs12billion from the federal government for rebuilding the region in wake of the disaster caused by the floods, Chief Minister Syed Mehdi Shah said on September 5. Shah noted he will present his demand at the meeting of the Council of Common Interest (CCI) scheduled for September 6. Although the federal government has not awarded Gilgit-Baltistan membership in the CCI, the chief minister was to attend the meeting as a special case to brief the leadership on the devastation caused by the floods to the area.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/47071/g-b-to-demand-rs12-billion-for-rehabilitation/>

International Developments

“AKCSP receives Unesco Award of Distinction for restoring Gulabpur Khanqah”, Business Recorder, September 30, 2010

SKARDU: The Gulabpur Khanqah in Shigar valley, Skardu, Baltistan was recently awarded the 2010 Asia-Pacific Award of Distinction in Cultural Heritage by Unesco. For nine consecutive times, the Aga Khan Cultural Service Pakistan (AKCSP), which is the operational arm of the Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme (AKHCP) of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) in Pakistan, won a Unesco Asia Pacific Cultural Heritage Award for its conservation efforts in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The more prominent awards won earlier being for Baltit Fort in Hunza and Shigar Fort in Baltistan. A total of 33 entries, from 14 countries in the region, were submitted for consideration. The conservation project entries included museums, hotels, cultural institutions, educational institutions, religious sites, industrial sites, public institutions, residential buildings, urban districts and islands.

<http://beta.brecorder.com/section/37/1/1107287:akcsp-receives-unesco-award-of-distinction-for-restoring-gulabpur-khanqah.html>

“Japan to provide funds for building school in AJK”, Daily Times, September 30, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The Japanese government has decided to extend financial support of US \$106,009 to the Fazilia Trust Pakistan (FTP), a non-government organisation, to construct a primary school in Dhirkot, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Ambassador of Japan Chihiro Atsumi and Chairman FTP Muhammad Akram Shah signed the agreement on September 27 in Islamabad. The grant had been issued to aid the children of the village. At the signing ceremony, Atsumi stressed the provision of basic education to the children.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C30%5Cstory_30-9-2010_pg7_25

“Vast scope for foreign investment in AJK”, Pakistan Observer

JEDDAH: AJK Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan noted that there vast scope for foreign investment in Azad Kashmir and for this purpose Business Advisor Council will be established in North America, Middle East, and European Union Headquarters in Brussels.

The AJK Prime Minister was talking to a delegation of international investors after performing Umra. He said Federal Government is being consulted for the formation of Advisor council so that foreign investors could be attracted to the State where many opportunities exist.

He assured that the State Government would extend all the facilities to the foreign investors and pointed out that necessary steps have been taken in this connection. Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said that the Government would soon announce the Industrial Investment Schedule. He said there is cheap labour and as such the cost of production will be less in Azad Kashmir.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=50461>

Hameed Shaheen, “UK charities to build houses in AJK”, Pakistan Observer

ISLAMABAD: Two noted British charities UK Charity and Muslim Hands International would build 100 houses for the affectees of the recent floods in Azad Jammu and Kashmir as part of humanitarian help. This was announced by a combined British charities delegation in its meeting on Friday night with the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan in Kashmir House in Islamabad. The delegation comprising Ch Muhammad Sarwar, ex-MP, sitting MP Yasmeen Qureshi, Mr Lakhath-e-Hasnain Chairman Muslim Hands International and its country manager Mr Zia Noor was led by Lord Nazir Ahmed.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=50726>

Other Developments

“SBP to open branch in G-B”, Pakistan Times

GILGIT: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has decided to establish its unit in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) to regularize the government transactions and monitor financing. Official sources stated that the State Bank had approached the government of GB to set up its branch in the area and for the purpose experts were tasked to carry out the feasibility report.

<http://www.pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=15033>

Shabbir Mir, “Food aid goes abegging”, Business Recorder, September 27, 2010

GILGIT: Tons of relief goods meant for the flood-affected people in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) have been sitting in the G-B House in Islamabad for over a

month and have started to rot, sources stated on September 26.

The relief goods donated in the first week of August have not been transported to the area due to the negligence of officials concerned. Cooking oil, flour, sugar and other edible items are reported to be among the donated items. Insects are now said to have attacked them and according to a source, theft can also not be ruled out. The rotting items have started to smell, making it difficult for people to stay in the G-B House where local politicians can stay at the house at concessional rates.

<http://beta.brecorder.com/section/50/1/1106377:chinese-presence-in-gilgit-baltistan.html>

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir-An Overview

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK): An Overview

Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) is constitutionally an integral part of the Indian Union and remains under Pakistani occupation since 1947¹, when Pakistan's Army engineered a tribal invasion and took control of more than 114,500 square kilometers of J&K. Pakistan declared its occupied part as 'Azad' or free and conferred to J&K Muslim Conference, a pro-Pakistani local political party, to constitute its first titular government.

Subsequent to occupation, Pakistan embarked on the agenda of usurping J&K. First to be annexed was Gilgit-Baltistan, which went under the direct control of Pakistan in 1949, as the leaders of AJK Muslim Conference were forced to hand over these regions of J&K through the 'Karachi Agreement'. Likewise, Shinaki Kohistan and Chitral, which constituted parts of Jammu & Kashmir before its partition in 1947, were also annexed and merged into the NWFP of Pakistan in 1955 and 1970 respectively. Later, when Pakistan and China agreed to demarcate 'international border' in 1963, Pakistan provisionally ceded 19,313 sq. kilometers of trans-Karakoram track of J&K including the segment of Baltistan known as 'Shaksgam' and part of Gilgit called 'Raskam' to China.²

Salient features of PoK are as under:

Total Area of PoK (under the current form): 85,793 sq. kilometer

Administrative Divisions: Two, namely Mirpur-Muzaffarabad (referred to as Azad Jammu & Kashmir or AJK by Pakistan) and Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan (FAGB).

Area ceded to China by Pakistan: 19,313 sq. kilometer

Area of Chitral: 14,850 sq. kilometer

Area of Shinaki-Kohistan: 5,398 sq. kilometer

AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR (AJK)

The Muzaffarabad district of Kashmir province, Mirpur and parts of Poonch districts of Jammu province have been under Pakistan's control since the tribal invasion of 1947. Pakistan amalgamated these districts together and created the so-called AJK. AJK is the south-western political entity of the former princely state of Jammu & Kashmir. It borders the present-day Kashmir province to the east, Jammu province to south-east (both separated from it by the Line of Control), the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan (NWFP) to the west, the Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan Region (FAGB) of J&K to the north, and the Punjab Province of Pakistan to the south. AJK is envisaged as an autonomous region by Pakistan. The government of AJK is considered as a parallel government, which was established to challenge the legitimacy of the J&K government in Srinagar. Despite the fact that AJK is neither a country nor a province of Pakistan, it has its own President, Prime Minister, High and Supreme Courts, Penal Code, national anthem and a flag. These structures and the designations are only titular in nature and real authority lies with the federal government of Pakistan. Significant matters such as defence, tax revenues, supposed 'foreign policy', rehabilitation of refugees and the financial control have been carefully placed under the discretion of the political establishment of Pakistan.

Currently, the parts of Kashmir province under PoK is divided into three districts of Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Neelum, while the parts of Jammu province under PoK is divided into five districts namely Poonch/Rawalakot, Sudhnati/Pallandari, Bhimber, Kotli and Mirpur.

Area of AJK: 13,297 square km

Population: 2.973 million (1998 population census), Male, 1.850 million; Female, 1.832 million

Capital: Muzaffarabad

Kashmir (Muzaffarabad Division) comprises of 3 districts: Bagh, Muzaffarabad and Neelum

Jammu (Mirpur Division) comprising of 5 districts: Bhimber, Kotli, Mirpur, Sudhnati/Pallandari and Rawalakot/Poonch

President: Raja Zulqarnain Khan

Prime Minister: Raja Farooq Haider Khan

Political Structure

AJK Council: Total 12 members, selected by Prime Minister of Pakistan, six each representing governments of AJK and Pakistan. The AJK Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

AJK Legislative Assembly: Total seats are 49, of which 29 are directly elected from the AJK, 11 are elected from various districts of Pakistan under the provision for the 'Kashmiri refugees', whereas 8 seats are reserved for females, overseas Kashmiris and the technocrats.

Judicial System: AJK has its own High and Supreme Courts, which are assisted by district session and magistrate courts. Further, AJK has its own Bar Council and Penal Code. However, approval of chief justices for High and Supreme Courts comes from Pakistani-dominated AJK Council. In addition, Pakistan's military tribunals also function in AJK. The Chief Secretary, regional commissioners, and Inspector General of Police are also appointed by Pakistani minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan (KAGB), previously known as Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (KANA).

Ethnic Groups: Gujjars, Jats, Mughal, Rajputs, Sudhan, Awan, Qureshi, Pashtuns, Shins, Ladakhi, Baltis etc.

Religious Groups: Sunni, Ahlehadith, Shia, Nurbakhshi, Christians, Qadianis, Hindus

Languages: Punjabi, Hindko, Pahari, Kashmiri, Balti, Puriki, Shina

Political Groups: United Jammu and Kashmir Peoples' National Party, AJK Muslim Conference, International Kashmir Alliance, JK National Party,

Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (Amanullah), Peoples United Action Committee, All Parties National Alliance (APNA)

Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan (FAGB)

Gilgit-Baltistan was previously referred to by Pakistan as the Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA). It is the northernmost political entity within the Pakistan occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoK) and is under direct control of the Islamabad government. The area, after separation of Chitral and Shinaki Kohistan, is still five and half times bigger than AJK. It borders Ladakh and Tibet to its east; East-Turkestan to its north; Afghanistan and Tajikistan to its north-west; Chitral to its west; Dir, Swat, Kohistan and Kaghan districts of NWFP to its south while AJK and the Kashmir Valley lie to its south-east. Before 1947, Baltistan was part of Ladakh region and ruled through the Jammu provincial government, while Gilgit was ruled under the authority of Kashmir province. When Pakistan occupied these regions, they were amalgamated under the garb of so-called 'Northern Areas' and thereby received the status of federally controlled region in 1974. However, the status of Gilgit-Baltistan is left undefined in the successive constitutions of Pakistan. Pakistan accepts Gilgit-Baltistan as part of the Princely State of Jammu & Kashmir, however, does not consider it as part of AJK. Due to a direct control imposed from Islamabad, the locals still await constitutional and judicial rights. For instance, they lack representation in the Pakistani Parliament, Council of Common Interests (CCI), Hydro-electric Board and National Finance Commission (NFC). Further, they cannot access the provincial high courts and the Supreme Court of Pakistan for justice. The Judicial Commissioner exercises judicial powers in Gilgit-Baltistan who is a political figure nominated by the Minister for KAGB.

After occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan in 1949, Pakistan administered the region under the draconian and inhumane Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) for around 20 years.³ PM Z.A. Bhutto of Pakistan abolished FCR in 1974 and introduced an ad-hoc presidential ordinance to govern the region. Since then, Gilgit-Baltistan has

been ruled by presidential ordinances, which have come under repeated amendments. In 1994, PM Benazir Bhutto promulgated Northern Areas Governance Order which was later renamed as Legal Framework Order (LFO) by President Musharraf in 2007.⁴ In essence, they all remained as ad-hoc ordinances without any constitutional cover.⁵ As pressure from both local and international political and human rights organizations increased with demands of genuine political and judicial rights for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan announced the so-called 'Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order' on October 26, 2009.⁶ Unfortunately, this order is yet another presidential ordinance with no parliamentary backing, and replaces the current LFO with some amendments.⁷ The term 'self governance' is coined as a strategic move to defuse pressure of the international organizations, which promises to introduce administrative, political, economic and judicial reforms in Gilgit-Baltistan. Although the ordinance is claimed as a replica of the AJK political and judicial system; it refuses the post of president, prime minister to the locals and establishment of penal code, and High and Supreme Courts.

According to the order, Northern Areas will be called Gilgit-Baltistan and the current Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA) will be replaced by Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA), which will have the right to legislate and choose a chief minister. Further, Pakistan will replace the existing Chairman of NALA with a governor to ensure federal government's control over the region. Gilgit-Baltistan would also have its own public service commission, a chief election commissioner, an auditor general, and a boundary commission to settle boundary dispute between Pakistan and J&K. The legislative assembly of Gilgit-Baltistan would have a total of 33 members, including six reserved seats for women and three for technocrats. Further, similar to AJK Council, Gilgit-Baltistan Council will be constituted to ensure representation of federal government in the region. The council will enjoy legislative powers over 60 odd subjects. It will have 15 members

which shall be presided over by the prime minister of Pakistan. While the Assembly is given the powers to propose the budget, approving authority will be ministry of KAGB in Islamabad. Compared to the provinces of Pakistan, where the chief minister is the supreme authority, the newly proclaimed order rests all administrative, political and judicial authority with the Pakistani governor which will eventually make the assembly a toothless tiger. Governor will be the executive authority and custodian of tax and revenues. He will administer Gilgit-Baltistan council on behalf of the prime minister of Pakistan, and oversee public service commission, election commission, boundary commission, judiciary, and auditor general's office. He will be the authority to appoint heads of public service commission, election commission, boundary commission, commissioner of excise and taxation, chief judge of appellate court, auditor general, regional cabinet members and advisors. He will have the right to approve the budget, and dissolve the assembly and impose emergency under prescribed conditions. Further, the Inspector General of Police, Chief Secretary and all departmental secretaries, directors of departments, and commissioner and deputy commissioners of districts will be appointed by the governor. Likewise, it will not be the Assembly but the Council under the governor, which will legislate on natural resources of Gilgit-Baltistan, including minerals, forests, electricity and water storage, industries, school curricula, tourism, cinematography etc.

Salient Features of FAGB are as under:

Area of FAGB: 72,496 sq. kilometer

Population: 870,347 (1998 population census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: seven

Baltistan Region (part of Ladakh) is divided into Ganche and Skardu districts

Gilgit Region is divided into Astore, Diamer, Ghizer, Hunza-Nagar and Gilgit districts

Ethnic Groups: Shin, Balti, Puriki, Ladakhi,

Wakhi, Yashkun, Tibetan, Mongol, Tatar, Mon, Pashtun, Khowar, Dom, Gujjar, Rajput and Kashmiri

Religious Groups: Shia (Twelvers), Nurbakhshi (Twelvers), Ismaili, Sunni, and Ahlehadith

Languages: Shina, Balti, Wakhi, Khowar, Gujjari, Burushaski, Puriki, Kashmiri, Pashto

Political Structure: In July 2009, NALA was dissolved before it could complete its 5-years term, and along with that, advisors to the Chairman including the Chief Executive were also sacked. Subsequently, election for GBLA was held on November 12, 2009 under the newly proclaimed self-governance and empowerment order. Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the ruling party of Pakistan, won two-third majority in GBLA and formed government.

Gilgit-Baltistan Council: Total 15 members, selected by Prime Minister of Pakistan; 7 representing government of Gilgit-Baltistan and 8 representing government of Pakistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Further, Chief Minister, Governor, Minister for KAGB and Prime Minister of Pakistan are voting members of GBC.

Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Council: GBLA has 24 directly elected members while 6 female and 3 technocrats come through selection.

Governor of G-B: Dr Shama Khalid

Chief Minister G-B: Syed Mehdi Shah of Skardu district.

Political Groups: Balwaristan National Front (BNF), Gilgit-Baltistan Thinkers Forum, Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement (GBUM), Baltistan National Movement, Karakoram National Movement, Gilgit Baltistan Democratic Alliance (GBDA), Gilgit Baltistan National Alliance (GBNA), All Parties National Alliance (APNA)

Judicial Structure: Instead of High and Supreme Courts, Gilgit-Baltistan will have an appellate court which will be headed by the chief judge. The chief judge, as well the session and district judges will be appointed by the Pakistani prime minister. In

addition to the appellate court, there will be a chief court in Gilgit. The number of judges has been increased from three to five. In addition, Pakistan's military tribunals will continue to function in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Literacy rate: 15% male; 3.5% female (World Bank estimates of 1997)

Per Capita Income: PCI of Gilgit-Baltistan is around one-fourth of Pakistan's average (US\$264 compared to Pakistan's US\$ 1,071).⁸

State of Infrastructure: More than two-thirds of the villages lack potable water, electricity, telephone, health units, girls' schools, paved roads, ration depot, and pony tracks.

Endnotes

1. Baltistan was occupied by Pakistan a year later in 1948
2. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2754976?seq=7>
3. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/world/pakistan/law.htm>
4. <http://ips-pk.org/content/view/234/259/>
5. <http://www.kashmirnewz.com/a0012.html>
6. <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/thenewspaper/national/gilgitbaltistanpackage-termed-an-eyewash-089>
7. <http://www.kashmirnewz.com/a0012.html>
8. AKRSP Socio-economic Survey of Northern Areas and Chitral (SESNA-C) 2005; http://www.finance.gov.pk/finance_blog/?p=238; <http://finance.kalpoint.com/pdf/highlights/todays-pick/per-capita-income-falls-to-1071.pdf>

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PoK 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 as 'Azad Kashmir' and 'Gilgit Baltistan' by the government of Pakistan. The news reports have been abridged to provide clarity. IDSA is not responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the news items.

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