

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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National delimitation
Power POK Election
Policy Hydroelectric
Gilgit-Baltistan projects
Saudi Kishanganga
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Political Developments

'IIOJK' UK leaders meet 'AJK' premier

The Express Tribune, 31 July 2023

President Tehreek-e-Kashmir (TeK) United Kingdom, Raja Fahim Kayani and Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) and All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leader Altaf Ahmad Bhat, called on 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) PM Chaudhry Anwarul Haq. Both discussed the matters related to the ongoing liberation movement in 'IIOJK' and issues of overseas Pakistanis and Kashmiris settled in the UK. Haq had expressed deep concerns over the alarming political and human rights conditions in IIOJK and urged global leaders to take effective cognizance of the rampant state-sponsored terrorism by Indian forces in the region. Drawing attention to the urgency of the situation, the prime minister called upon the United Nations and other international organisations to intervene and put an end to the ruthless killing of innocent Kashmiris. He accused India of implementing an apartheid regime and breaking records of barbarism and brutality in the 'occupied territory.' Citing the revocation of 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir's special status on 5 August 2019, he raised concerns about India's attempts to alter the

region's demography through the issuance of fake domiciles to ex-servicemen and non-state residents.

He also hailed the role of overseas Kashmiris in promoting the Kashmir cause in the UK and Europe and added that Pakistan and 'AJK' are committed to supporting their Kashmiri counterparts across the border politically, morally, and diplomatically. He said we have never accepted the Line of Control (LoC) and nobody on the planet can stop me or any other Kashmiri to cross this bloody border and move between 'IIOJK' and 'AJK.' He assured the delegation that we will never compromise on the plebiscite, stressing that retired armed men of 'AJK' of which, he said there were nearly 0.2 million - will never tolerate the suffering and exploitation of people of the 'IIOJK.' Haq assured the TeK UK president that all overseas investors who want to invest in 'AJK' would be provided a conducive environment. The Tek UK president briefed the premier about the role of overseas Pakistanis and Kashmiris in the Kashmir liberation movement and the economy of the UK. Pakistanis and Kashmiris settled in the UK are playing a pivotal role in the economy and national integration of the UK which has also been admitted and hailed by their government, he said.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2428597/iiojk-uk-leaders-meet-ajk-premier>

5 August will be observed as a black day throughout 'AJK' and in foreign countries: 'AJK' PM

Daily Parliament Times, 31 July 2023

The 'Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Chaudhry has said that on 5 August, throughout 'Azad Kashmir' and in foreign countries, including in the 'occupied Kashmir' a black day will be observed against India's illegal actions and oppressive occupation that violates international laws. He expressed these views while having a special conversation with All Kashmir Newspapers Society (AKNS) president Amjad Chaudhry at Kashmir House Islamabad. He further claimed that India cannot remain in control of the state for a long time against the will of Kashmiris.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/07/31/august-5-will-be-observed-as-a-black-day-throughout-ajk-and-in-foreign-countries-pm-ajk/>

GB govt forms panels for delimitation of constituencies

Dawn, 5 August 2023

The Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) government has formed committees for the delimitation of constituencies of city metropolitan corporations, municipal corporations, tehsil councils, municipal committees, town committees, and union councils. The local body elections in GB will be held in November. The GB Election Commission has decided

to not employ teachers for election duties in the by-election for the GB Assembly constituency of Astore which is scheduled to be held on 9 September. According to a notification issued by GB Chief Election Commissioner Raja Shehbaz Khan, the committees have been formed in all three divisions to ensure proper delimitation of constituencies. The deputy commissioners of Gilgit, Diamer, and Baltistan divisions along with deputy directors of each district and assistant commissioner of the headquarters have been made committee members. They will be responsible for completing the delimitation process in their respective areas.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1768403/gb-govt-forms-panels-for-delimitation-of-constituencies>

Pakistan rejects all illegal Indian actions in 'IIOJK'

The Nation, 6 August 2023

Pakistan reiterated that it rejected all the unilateral and illegal actions taken by India in 'India Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) and vowed to continue extending its unwavering diplomatic, moral, and political support to Kashmiris in their just struggle. In his separate message, President Dr. Arif Alvi has resolved that Pakistan would continue to be the voice of its Kashmiri brothers and sisters, who had been making invaluable sacrifices and would extend

all possible support for the fullest realization of their legitimate rights. He said that durable peace and stability can only be achieved through a peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, following the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people. Similarly, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that as Pakistan marked the completion of four years since India deprived Kashmiris of their statehood by unilaterally annexing the 'IIOJK', we call upon India to reverse its post-5 August actions. He said that the last four years have represented the culmination of the worst human rights abuses including but not limited to the demographic changes, issuance of fake domiciles, internet shutdown, complete information blackout, and imprisonment of Kashmiri leadership of all hues and colours.

Meanwhile, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), Services Chiefs, and Pakistan Armed Forces also expressed solidarity with the brave and resilient people of 'IIOJK' in their just struggle for their right to self-determination according to the UN resolutions. In its statement, the ISPR said that the continuation of inhumane military lockdown, illegal measures to change the demographic structure of the 'occupied territory', and the gross and systematic transgressions of

human rights are all manifest violations of international law. The media wing of the military said the resolution of the Kashmir dispute according to the UN Resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people is imperative for enduring peace and stability in the region. It asserted that Pakistan Armed Forces pay rich tribute to the martyrs of 'IIOJK' for their supreme sacrifices and affirm full support of Pakistan for the provision of political, moral, and humanitarian support to Kashmiris in their just struggle against tyranny and illegal subjugation. To mark the day, scores of events including seminars, protest rallies, screening video documentaries, and photo exhibitions exposing 'Indian brutalities' on Kashmiri people, were organized across the country by the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) in collaboration with the provincial governments to pay homage to the Kashmiris and condemn the Indian illegal occupation on Jammu and Kashmir.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/06-Aug-2023/pakistan-rejects-all-illegal-indian-actions-in-iiojk>

Muhammad Tahir Khokhar says refugees of Kashmir are suffering from various problems

Daily Parliament Times, 6 August 2023

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader of 'Azad Kashmir', former parliamentary leader, and

former Minister of Tourism and Transport Muhammad Tahir Khokhar said that the refugees of Kashmir are suffering from various problems. At times, they are living in tents and are living in severe hardships in the rain and heat. There is no water supply system in the refugee camps. The refugees do not have clean water facilities. He said that there is a need to focus on the problems of the refugees, the refugees of Kashmir are our brothers and benefactors who sacrificed their today for our tomorrow and put their future at stake for us. He said that the entire Kashmiri nation has hopes from the Prime Minister of 'Azad Kashmir', Anwar-ul-Haq, that he should immediately pay attention to the problems of the Kashmiri refugees in the refugee camps.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/08/06/muhammad-tahir-khokhar-says-the-refugees-of-kashmir-are-suffering-from-various-problems-living-in-severe-hardships/>

APHC-'AJK' urges UN to force India to resolve Kashmir dispute

Pakistan Observer, 6 August 2023

All Parties Hurriyat Conference 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (APHC-AJK) chapter has demanded the United Nations (UN) to force India to stop its 'state terrorism' in 'Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) and settle the Kashmir dispute following the Kashmiris' aspirations.

The demand has been made by the APHC-'AJK' chapter through a memorandum submitted to the UN office in Islamabad on Saturday, on the occasion of Youm-e-Istehsal to be forwarded to the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres. It said while the situation in the 'occupied territory' has been terrible for over three decades, it has taken a turn for worse since 5th August 2019 when India abrogated the special status of 'IIOJK.' This move was aimed at stripping the region of its political, cultural, and historical identity, pushing the region deeper into a quagmire of unending violence, lawlessness, chaos, and uncertainty, it claimed. The memorandum said journalists and human rights defenders have been targeted en masse to prevent any protest or recording of human rights violations. Arbitrary detentions continue while public assembly is prohibited and hundreds of Kashmiris, including minors remain under preventive detention, it deplored.

<https://pakobserver.net/aphc-ajk-urges-un-to-force-india-to-resolve-kashmir-dispute/>

Since 2019, 'IIOJK' witnessed new heights of assimilation, and erasure of its identity: Kashmir Webinar

Daily Parliament Times, 6 August 2023

While highlighting the dangerous dimensions of Kashmir's forced annexation and its devastating impacts

on the socio-economic and political rights of Kashmiri people, speakers at a webinar hosted by the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) said that since the abrogation of article 370, the region has witnessed new heights of assimilation and the erasure of its socio-political, religious and cultural identity. The webinar titled 'Four years of annexation: Impacts on socio-economic and political rights of Kashmiri people', was attended and addressed by former diplomats, legal experts, rights activists, and political activists hailing from both sides of the line of control including Amb. Aizaz Chaudhry the former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Marry Scully, American philanthropist and human rights defender, Dr. Khurram Iqbal Associate Professor of Australian University, Dr. Waqas Ali Kausar, Associate prof NUML, Syed Muhammad Ali Nuclear and defense Analyst, Enes Alkan Researcher of Turkish, Prof. Arjun A Sethi, Human Rights lawyer Washington Cecilia Jessica, Robert Fantina Canadian Writer and journalist, and Amb. Abbas Ramadan. Ambassador of African human rights observatory.

The speakers emphasized the economic marginalization of the Kashmiri people by artificially manufacturing an identity against Kashmiris to exploit their rights. While referring to the fast-eroding Muslim identity of Kashmir,

the speakers said that in the aftermath of August 2019, Kashmiris have witnessed a gradual erosion of their political, cultural, and religious identity. Voicing their concern over the stepped-up human rights violations, ruthless suppression of dissent, and absence of rule of law in Kashmir, they said that despite the lofty claims of normalcy the territory presents a picture of a dismantled state without a functional government and rule of law. They said that the region was still being remotely controlled by New Delhi. The indigenous population has no say whatsoever in government policies, they said, adding that there has been a complete ban on political and religious gatherings for the past several years.

The deepening turmoil in the region, they said, has rattled the region's economy. Sharp spikes of poverty, hunger, joblessness, and growing unemployment lay bare Modi's mantra of so-called development in the region, adding that disintegration and dissolution of the state under the controversial Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act and subsequent developments have led to disempowerment, disenfranchisement and systematic marginalization of the indigenous population. About the surging lawlessness, they said, human rights abuses ranging from mass killings, forced disappearances, targeted killings, torture, rape, and

sexual abuse to suppression of freedom of speech and ban on religious gatherings, forced disappearances of women speak volumes about the reign of lawlessness in the region. The horrible story of the disappearance of women in Kashmir speaks volumes about the state of lawlessness and growing anarchy in the region. Forced silence in Kashmir, they said, was yet another dangerous but neglected dimension of the post-August 2019 scenario.

Loss of autonomy and subsequent legislation, they said, continue to pose a threat to the disputed region's demographics. Redefinition of the state's age-old domicile law and other related laws have lent an additional impetus to BJP's settler colonialism campaign to completely erase Kashmir's distinct identity, they said, adding that the move has adversely impacted the lives of people, besides leading to economic disempowerment and geographical displacement of the indigenous population. The new domicile policy has led to diminishing job avenues for locals and amendments in the state's land laws have severely undermined the native communities' rights over their land and property, they claimed.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/08/06/since-2019-iiobjk-witnessed-new-heights-of-assimilation-erasure-of-its-identity-kashmir-webinar/>

Kashmir in the global Limelight

The Nation, 6 August 2023

Pakistan-India relations have always been marred by animosity and distrust, this greatly impacted the Kashmir region. Since 5 August 2019, when India revoked Article 370 of its constitution and rebuked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, our foreign imperative rests on Kashmir which has been the subject of an unprecedented level of regional-cum-international focus. Pakistan, while within the norms of diplomatic customs remained a vocal combatant, actively strived to elucidate the perils posed by the Hindutva ideology of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its far-reaching implications on regional peace and security especially once perpetual context is being experienced since the division of both nuclear arch rivals. Pakistan launched a skillful, highly aggressive, and proactive diplomatic maneuver in response to India's unilateral actions to clutch on the independent status while keeping the world in oblivion. The case was also fought and hustled in full swing by our foreign office with due support by the military establishment, thus giving a stern warning on the brewing disaster in South Asia brought on by PM Narendra Modi's Hindu supremacist worldview.

Pakistan's diplomatic strategies were successful, bringing Kashmir to the attention of the world. Speaking twice of the necessity for a resolution in line with the UN Charter and pertinent UNSC resolutions, the UN Security Council discussed the situation in the region. In addition to inciting harsh reactions from Pakistan, Indians have also attempted to gear up against China, a heated standoff at Galwan as a result of India's unilateral move to change the status of Ladakh, an area that is also claimed by China has also been viewed with contempt. The standoff highlighted the relationship between the Kashmir issue and regional stability and emphasised the need for a peaceful resolution to the conflict following the UN Charter.

Pakistan's tenacious diplomacy and vast information campaign successfully defeated India's attempts to portray the Kashmir conflict as an internal concern. The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, and The Guardian, among other major Western journals, vehemently denounced Indian operations in Indian-administrated Jammu and Kashmir. Asian Review, TRT, Al Jazeera, Arab News, Asia Times, and other regional media groups have also condemned the Indian government for its policies in the area. Many organisations and world figures expressed strong support

for the Kashmir problem. In a letter to the European Commission President and the Vice President of the Commission/High Representative, more than a dozen members of the European Parliament pleaded with them to act and address the grave situation in Kashmir.

Grave human rights violations in Kashmir under the Indian administration have been thoroughly recorded by some human rights groups, including the UN, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch. Cavernous concerns regarding the state of affairs in Kashmir have been raised in statements by Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations, the Russell Tribunal, Genocide Watch, and the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC). Some have even said that the region's situation has the makings of genocide.

However, recent developments concerning cordial relations between the United States and India have become a major concern for Kashmir. Some experts fear that these strengthened ties could potentially lead to an escalation of atrocities in the region. There are worries that any adverse actions from India may be overlooked or silenced on the global stage due to the favorable view the US holds toward India. This situation raises apprehensions about the

implications it could have for the stability and security of Kashmir and the lack of international scrutiny if human rights violations or violence were to occur. The strengthening strategic ties between India and the US seem to have influenced the global response to the Manipur atrocities and Haryana violence, as international media has been relatively silent on these issues. There is a concern that if such atrocities had occurred in a different country, the international media would have taken a stronger stance. This discrepancy in coverage raises fears that the Kashmir issue might also lose its prominence in the mainstream, further emphasising the need for continued global attention and action to address human rights concerns in the region.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/06-Aug-2023/kashmir-in-the-global-limelight>

Economic Developments

Kishanganga Conundrum

The Nation, 31 July 2023

On 6 July 2023, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) rejected India's objections to the international court's assumption of jurisdiction over the Kishanganga and Ratle Hydroelectric projects according to the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT). This development came after India refused to communicate

directly with or appear before the court because it considers the court not competent enough to decide upon the questions placed in front of it. However, after a prolonged oral hearing and written submissions in The Hague in May, the court issued a verdict on its competency and refuted India's objection. Progress on this issue occurred after a pause of several years in the legal proceedings of the Kishanganga project; thus, the arrival of this ruling is perceived as good tidings for Pakistan. India started working on the 330-megawatt Kishanganga project in 2007 and the 850-megawatt Ratle project in 2012.

Pakistan has reservations over these projects owing to their controversial designs, which would disrupt water supply into the country and violate the six-decade-old IWT. Nonetheless, Annexure D of the treaty specifically mentions the conditions and technical details that India is required to uphold while constructing hydroelectric power projects on the western rivers, including adherence to run-of-river design. The dispute arose due to India's deviations from these conditions, consequently making the Kishanganga and Ratle projects a matter of extreme significance to the national security of Pakistan over the years. Since the two plants have been claimed as run-of-river, the PCA has already declared the

diversion of the river by the Kishanganga hydroelectric plant legal under the IWT in its 2013 award. Pakistan's current request for arbitration identifies seven disputes that pertain to the pond size, low-level sediments outlets, and design for the gated spillways for flood control of the two plants. India is planning to build 150 run-of-river plants on the western rivers.

In the process, the same designs will be replicated, which can harm the water resources of Pakistan. Hence, the question of the legality of their designs for these projects is of extreme significance to the water security of Pakistan. In this particular situation, besides the Permanent Indus Commission given in Article VIII, the IWT offers two alternatives for the resolution of disputes in its Article IX; technical questions can be placed before a highly-qualified engineer (a neutral expert) or before a panel consisting of highly-qualified lawyers and engineers (court of arbitration).

Pakistan has relentlessly sought the World Bank to appoint a court of arbitration that can review the designs of these two projects, whereas India has staunchly defended its view that the matter should be reviewed by a neutral expert. Pakistan argues that the decisions by the neutral expert were non-binding. Given the gravity of the

situation, Pakistan has been sending its high-level delegates to the United States to reiterate Pakistan's demand for constituting an international court of arbitration. India has been successfully avoiding the court's proceedings by citing its desire to opt for a neutral expert. Now that the PCA has finally initiated its proceedings, Pakistan has an opportunity to effectively halt Indian attempts to diminish the downstream water flow. Pakistan has formulated concise and clear questions for the court to review, leaving no room for escape or ambiguity. There will be a re-emphasis on the PCA's final award from 2013, which outlined strict conditions, including amendments to the Indian design and operation of these dams.

India will resume its illegal designs with all of its other projects unless Pakistan successfully obtains a ruling from PCA in its favor. In this regard, Pakistan needs to ensure the availability of national data complying with international standards on water resource usage, including environment, hydroelectric usage, and agriculture, which was lacking on Pakistan's side in the previous Kishanganga award. To achieve this goal, Pakistan must urgently construct and strategize water storage facilities while enhancing institutional capabilities to secure its rightful share under the IWT.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Jul-2023/kishanganga-conundrum>

PM Okays extension of national power policy to GB

Dawn, 1 August 2023

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has approved the extension of the National Power Policy to Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and extended the jurisdiction of institutions concerned to the region, according to a press release issued by GB Chief Secretary Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani. A summary was moved by the advisor to the PM on Kashmir Affairs and GB at the request of the GB government which has been approved by the prime minister. He has issued directives to the relevant ministries to forward a summary to the president for approval. Calling it a historic decision, the statement added that this will be a significant step towards overcoming the energy crisis that has plagued the region for 72 years. Separately, GB Chief Minister Gulbar Khan chaired the second meeting of his cabinet where he appreciated the role of a committee comprising the GB interior minister, home secretary, IG police, intelligence agencies, law enforcement agencies, and scholars of all disciplines, for maintaining peace in the region during Muharram. He said Ashura processions ended peacefully in the region. The chief minister also constituted a committee to assess the

damage caused by the recent rains and floods in the region.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1767786/pm-okays-extension-of-national-power-policy-to-gb>

The government of Pakistan should grant 'Azad Kashmir' the status of a tax-free province until the right to self-determination is given: Sardar Abdul Rehman Khan

UrduPoint, 1 August 2023

Sardar Abdul Rehman Khan, Chairman of the Qaumi Ittehad Party 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), expressed his strong support to the Bar Association Mirpur protest movement against excessive taxation in 'Azad Kashmir' and urged party officials and members to fully participate to make it a success. He stressed that the Pakistani government should grant 'Azad Kashmir' the status of a tax-free state up till the right to self-determination is realized in compliance with the United Nations (UN) resolutions. He said that the PDM government in Kashmir has failed and has no interest in resolving the issues that the local populace is facing. He said that the current political parties in 'Azad Kashmir' are hand in glove with the ruling parties in Islamabad in exploiting people. He stressed that the public should become aware and hold this administration

accountable as they were not elected to raise the cost of wheat and flour.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/kotli/kashmir/live-news-3673041.html>

Saudi Fund for Development Officially Inaugurates the King Abdullah Campus of UAJK

Daily Parliament Times, 4 August 2023

The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) officially inaugurated the King Abdullah Campus of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir University' (UAJK) in Muzafarabad, 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The King Abdullah campus was funded through a generous USD 90 million grant provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through SFD. The project was inaugurated by SFD's Director General of Asia Operations, Dr. Saud bin Ayed Al-Shammari, in the presence of the President of 'AJK', Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry. Also attending the inauguration ceremony was the Chairman of the Higher Education Commission, Professor Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, and the Vice Chancellor of the University of 'AJK' Professor Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi among others from both sides. The King Abdullah Campus is a cutting-edge facility that hosts 15 academic departments, as well as administration blocks, accommodation, a library, a mosque, a state-of-the-art auditorium,

and other essential amenities. Over 10,000 students, faculty members, and employees are expected to benefit from the new campus, which will offer cutting-edge research and educational opportunities while helping to support the sustainable socio-economic development of Pakistan.

The new campus will also contribute towards helping to realize the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG4, Quality Education, SDG5, Gender Equality, SDG8 Decent work and Economic growth, and SDG11, Sustainable Cities and Local Communities. On this occasion, 'AJK' president acknowledges the pivotal role played by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, led by the visionary King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, in the wake of the calamitous earthquake of 2005. The people of 'AJK' will forever cherish the profound impact of the substantial financial assistance bestowed upon us, which not only rebuilt our beloved university but also sowed the seeds of an unyielding friendship between Saudi Arabia and Kashmir.

On his part, the SFD Director General of Asia Operations, Dr. Saud bin Ayed Al-Shammari, said that SFD's contributions towards the reconstruction of the King Abdullah Campus, following the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, came from the Fund's

commitment to supporting Pakistan's sustainable development through the development of social infrastructure. The inauguration of the King Abdullah Campus is a major milestone in the development of the University of 'AJK'. It is a symbol of the strong friendship between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, and a testament to the commitment of the SFD to supporting development projects in Pakistan and other developing countries around the world.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/08/04/saudi-fund-for-development-officially-inaugurates-the-king-abdullah-campus-of-uajk/>

ECNEC recommends Rs.16bn for rural development, climate resiliency projects in Gilgit-Baltistan

Pamir Times, 5 August 2023

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) has approved the 'Rural Development & Climate Resilient Project GB' with a budget of Rs. 16, 264 million. Funds for this project are fully granted to the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). The initiative is supported by Agence Française de Développement (AFD), European Union (EU), and Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). This is the largest project in terms of cost and community-led efforts under the GB Annual Development Plan (GB-ADP), said a statement issued by GB govt. The

responsibility for implementing the project lies with the Planning and Development Department (P&DD) of GB, in partnership with AKDN. The scope of the project includes various aspects of community support, such as providing drinking water supply, sanitation facilities with treatment plants, climate-resilient, and energy-efficient housing, and Micro Hydro Power projects. It also focuses on strengthening Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and conducting Capacity Building programs for the Government of GB officials. Moreover, the project plans to pilot a green hydrogen project and conduct studies for sustainable tourism in the region, promoting environmentally friendly and sustainable practices in GB.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2023/08/05/ecnec-approves-rs-16bn-for-rural-development-climate-resiliency-projects-in-gilgit-baltistan/>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

The Supreme Appellate Court Chief Justice landed in China for a four-day visit

Dailyk2, 1 August 2023

The Chief Justice of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Supreme Appellate Court, Justice Sardar Shamim Khan, Chief Justice of GB Chief Court, Justice Ali Baig, and Registrar of Chief Court Ghulam Abbas Chopar left for China on a four-day

visit at the request of the Supreme Court of China. The delegations led by the chief justice were warmly welcomed upon their arrival in Kashgar by the high officials of the Xinjiang Province and the judicial officials, who also spoke about matters of common interest for the advancement of the judicial system and judiciary in GB. They also vowed to work together in the future on issues about the judiciary.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/15869>

'Youm-e-Istehsaal' to be observed on 5 August across Kashmir

UrduPoint, 1 August 2023

On 5 August, the people and government of Pakistan will come together to observe 'Youm-e-Istehsaal' (Day of Exploitation) which commemorates the fourth anniversary of the ongoing military siege of 'Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IOJK) by Indian soldiers. This day is a somber opportunity to express opposition to the continued persecution, cruelty, and fear inflicted by the Indian 'occupying forces' in 'IOK.' Several protest marches, processions, and demonstrations will take place across the province. The goal of the protesters is to bring attention to the unrelenting crimes against humanity and government-sponsored violence done by the Indian 'occupying forces'

against common people in Kashmir. They demand immediate international action to stop the breaches of human rights in the area. Several visual displays would illustrate the agony brought on by 'Indian oppression' in Kashmir. Through their separate platforms, a range of representatives from various fields will convey compelling messages emphasizing the necessity of aiding and rescuing the oppressed Kashmiris. In addition to highlighting the 'IOK' people's inalienable right to self-determination, proponents of the long-running dispute call for a peaceful conclusion. They also call for the United Nations' (UN) and the international community's support for the right to self-determination to alleviate the condition of Kashmiris who are being repressed and put a stop to the continued human suffering in the area.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/laahore/national-news/live-news-3672779.html>

The aorta of Pakistan has been seized by India: JI 'AJK'

Jasarat, 5 August 2023

Sheikh Aqeel-ur-Rehman Advocate, a top leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (JI-AJK), asserted that India had taken possession of Pakistan's aorta and urged his nation to act swiftly to protect it. He claimed that Kashmiris have made endless sacrifices

throughout history and that the Pakistani government must move beyond rhetoric and take action to make their sacrifices worthwhile. While speaking to a crowd of protesters and JI leaders on the occasion of Exploitation Day, he claimed that the special status of Kashmir was abolished by India on 5 August and it was included in its Union, but Pakistan's leaders remained to watch in silence and a mere spectator. He said that to free Kashmir, the Pakistani military's commanders must take decisive action following Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's directive to protect the Kashmiris from Indian crimes. According to him, Kashmir could have been free now if Pakistan had adhered to Quaid-i-Azam's Kashmir policy.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2023/08/05/india-has-blocked-pakistans-aorta-jamaat-e-islami-azad-kashmir/>

The Kashmir issue should be resolved following UN resolutions: Pakistan FO

Jasarat, 5 August 2023

Pakistan has emphasised the importance of carrying out the pertinent United Nations Security Council resolutions to settle the Kashmir dispute. Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, the spokeswoman for the Foreign Office (FO), stated that Pakistan's people and

government stand with their Kashmiri brothers and sisters on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of India's illegal and unilateral activities in 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir, which was forcibly implemented by India on 5 August 2019. On this special day, she said that the nation of Pakistan, including its President, Prime Minister, and Foreign Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering moral, diplomatic, and political support for the Kashmir cause and Jammu and Kashmir. It has emphasized resolving the conflict following the Kashmiri people's demands and UN Security Council resolutions.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2023/08/05/united-nations-resolutions/>

Social Media (tweets)

Basharat Issa @BasharatIssa

31 July 2023

10 years of CPEC and people of Gilgit-Baltistan are still stuck at road blockages as a result of climate change induced disasters and poorly managed infrastructures, policies and marginalisation with no fundamental constitutional representation and voice. #GilgitBaltistan.

<https://twitter.com/BasharatIssa/status/1686022331586514944>

Fahad @ShahFahdB*3 August 2023*

Gwadar & GB, gateways of CPEC, face the worst exploitation. The issue is when ppl speak out against the elites' exploitation, they're dubbed anti-state. Insane state of deprivation. #GilgitBaltistan #Gwadar.

<https://twitter.com/ShahFahdB/status/1686822336815579160>

all.about.pakistan @Aboutpakistan90*4 August 2023*

The National flag carrier Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has announced the commencement of international flights in Skardu. #AAPakistan #Pakistan #Skardu #Hunza #PIA #GilgitBaltistan

<https://twitter.com/Aboutpakistan90/status/1687503994917199887>

Blabidin @Blabidin*5 August 2023*

Why is it that food & beverage products that are in stark violation of food safety standards, made at the center such as Multan and Haripur, are being sold only in Gilgit-Baltistan (never seen such products in down country). Why? The situation has festered under the foul GoGB.

<https://twitter.com/Blabidin/status/1688190626087501824>

ISF Azad Jammu & Kashmir @IsfAjkOfficial*6 August 2023*

Special prayers for Khan Sahab at various shrines across Pakistan! Today Khatm e Quran was held at Hazrat Tahir Alauddin Al Gilani's shrine by special prayer by his son.. Inshallah Khan will be back.

<https://twitter.com/IsfAjkOfficial/status/1688221197295620096>

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Disclaimer

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