

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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Political Developments

India starts the cultural conversion of Kashmiris: Hameed Shaheen Alvi

Daily Parliament Times, 13 February 2023

The advisor to the former prime minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Hameed Shaheen Alvi, has expressed grave concern over media reports that Indian 'colonial authorities' in 'occupied Kashmir' have begun giving cow urine-soaked medicines to the Muslim population there to convert them to their 'way of life.' Indian 'occupying forces' in 'occupied Kashmir' are engaging in such barbaric conversion as a grave violation of human rights. In the meantime, he claimed that one of the worst crimes that Indian 'invaders' have been performing for a while now is evicting Muslim owners from their ancestral homes and giving non-Kashmiris possession of the seized property. Such human rights violations on the rise from the day in and day out warrant urgent UN intervention as Kashmir is an UN-liability dispute being on Security Council's agenda, he asserted.

Alvi claimed that the UN should give aggressive Indian cultural hegemonists a leash because cultural hegemony is the oldest goal of Indian RSS-baptized leaders, as seen by their widely publicized slogan, 'Akhand Bharat.' Since October 1947, India has been 'militarily occupying' a large portion of the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K); however, despite horrific anti-Kashmiri 'oppressions and atrocities',

India has been unable to turn Kashmiris into their slaves. They are currently in a grand uprising against the 'Indian occupation' because the UN Security Council has never recognized India's 'occupation' of J&K; he warned that Kashmiris will not back down from their legitimate rights to be free from India.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/02/13/india-starts-cultural-conversion-of-kashmiris-hameed-shaheen-alvi/>

Tributes paid to Kashmiri leader Maqbool Butt in Washington

Daily Times, 13 February 2023

Maqbool Butt, a Kashmiri leader, died for the sake of freeing his people from 'India's tyranny', according to speakers at a Washington, D.C., ceremony honoring him on the 39th anniversary of his death. The head of the Global Forum for Peace and Justice, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, described Butt as a selfless and inspirational spirit and noted that before he was hanged on 'false accusations' in New Delhi's notorious Tihar jail, Butt have written that 'there will be many Maqbool Bhats who will come and go, but the independence movement in Kashmir should continue.' Fai claimed, that 'today the whole nation of Kashmir is following the footsteps of Maqbool Bhat for the liberation of their motherland: Jammu and Kashmir.' While underscoring that the mission of Maqbool Butt is still alive, Fai claimed that 'today, he is an inspiration to millions of Kashmiris and those striving for human rights, human

dignity and right to UN-pledged self-determination.’ Sardar Zarif Khan, secretary-general of the Kashmir American Welfare Association (KAWA) said that Maqbool Butt believed in the Kashmir cause passionately and added that the killings of innocent civilians in ‘Indian-occupied Kashmir’ (IoK) must shake the conscience of all peace-loving people. He condemned India’s campaign to muzzle the press, demanded the right to assemble and freedom of expression in ‘IoK’, and added that the ultimate sacrifice of Shaheed Maqbool Butt will not go in vain. Shoaib Irshad, joint secretary of KAWA, said that the ‘brutalities’ of the Indian government could not and should not go unnoticed and that it is the responsibility of the Kashmiri diaspora to be the voice of voiceless people in the corridors of powers all over the world. The speakers demanded of the Indian government to return the mortal remains of Shaheed Maqbool Bhat and Shaheed Afzal Guru to their relatives in Kashmir.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1062458/in-washington-tributes-paid-to-kashmiri-leader-maqbool-butt/>

India expanding the settler-colonial project in ‘IIOJK’ by grabbing Kashmiris’ land

The Nation, 13 February 2023

India is expanding its ‘settler-colonial project’ in ‘Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir’ (IIOJK) by grabbing more and more land from the Kashmiris. A report released by Kashmir Media Service said India has

been treating Kashmir as its ‘colony’ right from 1947 when its troops ‘illegally’ landed in Srinagar on 27th October 1947 against the partition plan of the subcontinent and the aspirations of the Kashmiris. It said the Modi regime’s 5 August 2019, illegal move to repeal the special status of the ‘occupied territory’ was another step towards ‘colonizing Kashmir.’ It claimed that colonization of ‘IIOJK’ has since long been a dream of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and added that the marginalization of the indigenous population and policies of land grab are obvious manifestations of PM Modi’s ‘colonial project’ in the ‘occupied territory.’

The report claimed that wiping away Kashmir’s special status has been a dream of ‘Hindutva forces’, and as part of its ‘settler-colonial project’, India is changing the demography of ‘IIOJK’ by settling non-Kashmiri Hindus in the territory. The report claimed that India was exploiting Kashmir’s natural resources with full impunity through heavy militarization and that PM Modi is using Indian business companies and tycoons to expand the ‘colonization’ of Kashmir. It said India’s ‘colonial settler’ enterprise in ‘IIOJK’ is proceeding along the same lines as the Israeli grab land in Palestine. It stated that India’s colonial actions in ‘IIOJK’ are blatant violations of United Nations (UN) resolutions and that there is a deafening silence about Modi’s ‘naked colonialism in IIOJK.’ It went on to say that the world must end its silence

regarding India's colonialism in 'IIOJK' and end the unresolved Kashmir dispute following the UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/12-Feb-2023/india-expanding-settler-colonial-project-in-iiojk-by-grabbing-kashmiris-land>

World gradually realizing the significance of early resolution of Kashmir issue: 'AJK' president

Pakistan Today, 13 February 2023

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has claimed that the world community was gradually realizing the significance of the resolution of the Kashmir issue and the people of 'Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) will sooner or later achieve their right to self-determination. While addressing a gathering at his residence in Mirpur after returning from a week-long foreign tour, Sultan said that the main purpose of his recent visit to the UK, Europe, America, and Turkey was to expose the ambitious 'settler colonialism project', the PM Modi government has embarked on soon after changing the special status of the 'occupied Kashmir.'

He said that during his visit, he had a series of important meetings in which he raised the issue of Kashmir and the human rights situation in the region, and added that it was heartening to see that the world was gradually realizing the importance of early resolution of the Kashmir dispute. He stressed that

the Kashmir issue is on the agenda of the United Nations (UN) and the Secretary General of the UN is interested in resolving this issue and that the sacrifices of the 'martyrs' would never go in vain and the day was not far when the people of 'occupied Kashmir' will get freedom.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/02/13/world-gradually-realizing-significance-of-early-resolution-of-kashmir-issue-barrister-sultan/>

The body of Shaheed Kashmir Muhammad Muqoob Butt be handed over to Kashmiri people

Daily Parliament Times, 14 February 2023

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) leaders, including its vice-chairman Sardar Zahid Hussain Khan, central chief organizer Sardar Sabir Gul, and zonal president Malik Mushtaq Pasha, stated at a seminar sponsored by the JKLF France chapter that the body of 'Shaheed' Kashmiri leader Muhammad Muqoob Butt should be given to the Kashmiri people on the occasion of the 49th anniversary of Maqbool Butt's martyrdom. They also said that Yasin Malik should be immediately released and the 'baseless charges' against him should be dismissed and added that there is no border dispute or religious conflict surrounding Kashmir; it is a national and political issue. The speakers urged the Indian government to return 'Shaheed' Maqbool Butt and Afzal Guru's bodies to the Kashmiri people. They urged India to promptly reestablish the rule of law by removing foreign troops from the territory of the

State, allowing Kashmiris to exercise their unrestricted, unqualified and universally acknowledged right to self-determination.

The speakers affirmed to uphold the mission of 'Shaheed-e-Kashmir' Maqbool Butt, Tehreek leader Amanullah Khan, and thousands of martyrs, to continue their organized political and diplomatic campaign under the chairman and JKLF leader Yasin Malik's fearless leadership until the martyrs' unfinished business, namely the establishment of a democratic, independent, and honorable welfare state, was resolved. In response to the ongoing curfew in 'occupied Kashmir', the contentious decision against Chairman JKLF Yasin Malik, and other issues, the speakers expressed their concern over the criminal silence of the international community, human rights organizations, the European Union, and the UN Security Council. They reiterated that the JKLF will continue its principled struggle at the diplomatic level and expose all the conspiracies against the partition of Kashmir and will raise the issue of Kashmir at all forums and the holy blood of the martyrs will not be allowed to go in vain.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/02/14/body-of-shaheed-kashmir-muhammad-muqoob-butt-be-handed-over-to-kashmiri-people/>

'IIOJK' internet shutdowns

The Express Tribune, 14 February 2023

Kashmiris living under 'Indian occupation' continue to suffer from

deprivation of access to the outside world, with access to the internet still being restricted. A recent report by Surfshark, a top virtual private network company, said that 'occupied Kashmir' actually leads the world in internet shutdowns and restrictions, ranking well below Russia and Iran, which are both internationally notorious for restricting their citizens' access to the internet. But unlike Russia, Iran, and even the rest of India, where blackouts and restrictions were generally considered a responsive move to protests or other unrest once problems had already started, in Kashmir, they were often a preemptive move, taken just to 'put the people in their place'. The situation in Kashmir was so bad that it accounted for over 20% of all internet blackouts. India's parliament admits that there are few checks and balances on internet shutdowns and there is not even a central record of how many shutdowns have been ordered as several Indian media outlets have noted that shutdowns are often even associated with critical reporting on the PM Modi government's 'misdeeds and corruption', rather than security concerns. Surfshark says the internet in 'occupied Kashmir' was shut down for a total of 456 hours in 2022, meaning that full internet restrictions on a local level were imposed. But the actual number, nature, and length of shutdowns are even harder to gauge because targeted censorship is harder to detect for users and analysts alike.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2400977/iiojk-internet-shutdowns>

The world must take notice as the Modi regime brazenly violates UN resolutions, and other rights treaties: PM 'AJK'

Daily Parliament Times, 15 February 2023

The Prime Minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that the world community must take effective notice as India's 'apartheid regime' was brazenly violating the United Nations (UN) resolutions that guarantee the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir. The PM said this while talking to former All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) convener Syed Faiz Hussain Naqshbandi. During the meeting the duo discussed in detail the prevailing political and human rights situation in the 'Indian occupied Kashmir' (IoK). Tanveer Ilyas appointed Mr. Naqshbandi as his honorary special assistant on the Freedom Movement of Kashmir. While voicing his serious concern over the fast deteriorating political and human rights situation in the 'IoK' said that India has crossed all limits of 'barbarism and brutality' in Kashmir. While lambasting the Indian government for its 'destructive' and dodgy role in 'IoK', the PM said that India was openly violating the resolutions of the UN that guarantee the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir.

The PM said that a special session of the Legislative Assembly of 'AJK' would be convened to which the representatives of the APHC would be invited. He said that there is a need to mobilize the OIC regarding Kashmir

and added that influential world government should play their due role to resolve the Kashmir dispute. He claimed that the Indian government has not only established 'illegal domination' over Kashmir but has also started a plan to change the region's demography by settling non-state subjects. He said that instead of giving Kashmiris the right to self-determination, India has been 'shamelessly' trying to legitimize its 'occupation' and strengthening its control over the territory by installing its henchmen in the territory. The former convener of APHC Syed Faiz Hussain Naqshbandi appreciated the Prime Minister's efforts in highlighting the Kashmir issue and expressed the hope that concrete steps will be taken in this direction.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/02/15/world-must-take-notice-as-modi-regime-brazenly-violates-un-resolutions-other-rights-treaties-pm-ajk/>

Alarming Human Rights violations in 'IIOJK' needs global attention, says NA speaker

The Nation, 15 February 2023

A delegation of the United Kingdom (UK) based All-Party Parliamentary Groups (AP-PGs) on Freedom of Religion/Belief called on National Assembly (NA) speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf at Parliament House. The issues related to religious in-tolerance, interfaith harmony, and Human Rights (HR) violations particularly in 'Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) came under discussion. The NA speaker claimed that human rights

violations in 'IIOJK' are extremely disappointing and need immediate global attention. He said Pakistan always adopted a constructive approach toward the rights of all citizens including minorities and added that the constitution of Pakistan guarantees equal rights for all. He said Pakistan is deeply concerned about the surge in religious intolerance particularly incidents of desecration of the Holy Quran were very unfortunate and highly condemnable.

He further said that minorities have been playing a productive role in the national development of the country and added that provincial assemblies have reserved seats for minorities. He further said that Pakistan has a ministry for religious affairs and inter-faith harmony which works proactively to ensure that the interests and rights of every citizen including minorities are protected as per the Constitution. The APPGs delegation thanked the National Assembly speaker for the warm reception and appreciated Pakistan's efforts to-ward promoting global peace and harmony. They 'supported' Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir issue and assured that APPG will continue to make efforts in this regard.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/15-Feb-2023/alarmining-hr-violations-in-iiojk-needs-global-attention-says-na-speaker>

CTD and SPUs to be set up in 'AJK'

Daily Times, 15 February 2023

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has directed the authorities to establish a

Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and Special Protection Units (SPUs) for the security of foreigners working on different projects in 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK). The federal minister issued these directives while chairing a high-level meeting to review the security arrangements for foreign nationals working in 'AJK' and counter-terrorism measures being enforced by the region's government. The meeting was attended by federal secretary of interior division Yousaf Naseem Khokhar, chief secretary and IGP 'AJK,' and other officials of the 'AJK' government. Chief Secretary Muhammad Usman Chachar and Inspector General Police (IGP) Ameer Shaikh gave a detailed briefing about the law and order situation, security measures adopted by the law enforcement agencies, details about foreign nationals working on different projects in the region, security measures for their protection and counter-terrorism measures taken by the authorities. The minister while addressing the meeting said that government will never compromise on the issue of law and order and security measures, particularly the security of foreign nationals. He directed the management of projects where foreign nationals were working to take foolproof security arrangements within 30 days and strictly implement the law for spending one percent of their income on security measures and protection of foreign workers. The meeting decided to provide the required funds for the establishment of CTD and SPUs in 'AJK' and every cooperation will be extended to 'AJK'

to enhance the capacity of security institutions and maintain law and order besides preparing the Police to fight terrorism.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1062941/ctd-and-spus-to-be-set-up-in-ajk/>

Rally held in Muzaffarabad against demolition in India-held Kashmir

Dawn, 16 February 2023

A demonstration was held by Kashmiri activists to protest the ongoing demolition campaign in 'India occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IOJK), which they described as yet another 'ghastly but futile attempt by the fascist BJP-RSS administration to suppress the freedom-seeking people' of the disputed Himalayan region. The demonstration was organized by Pasban-i-Hurriyat Jammu Kashmir (PHJK), an organization of post-1989 migrants from across the divide, on the call of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) at a bustling thoroughfare outside the press club. The PHJK activists, who were holding placards and a giant banner staged a symbolic sit-in at Burhan Wani Chowk; 'forcible occupation of Kashmiris' land is unacceptable,' read one of the placards. Later, they staged a rally up to the Garhi Pan Chowk, during which they kept on chanting anti-India and pro-freedom slogans. Among the participants was the leader of the Opposition in the 'AJK' Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar and Jamaat-i-Islami 'AJK's acting emir Shaikh Aqeelur Rehman.

Last month, Indian authorities launched a massive demolition drive in the 'occupied territory', apparently to remove encroachments on the state land. However, already braving a string of draconian measures at the hands of the Indian government in the wake of the revocation of the special status of the occupied valley, the Kashmiris believe that the latest move resembles the Israeli model in Palestine. The demonstrators in Muzaffarabad regretted that the 'silence of the international community and organizations, such as the UN and OIC, was encouraging India to carry on its dreadful actions in occupied Kashmir in sheer disregard to UNSC resolutions and international and bilateral treaties.' The PHJK leader Uzair Ghazali on the occasion claimed that 'as the bullets and pellets were not enough, the fascist BJP-RSS regime is now using bulldozers like that of the Israelis in its desperate efforts to subdue the freedom-seeking Kashmiris,' however, he claimed, 'the latest move will also fail to break the resolve of the Kashmiris.'

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1737400/rally-held-in-muzaffarabad-against-demolition-in-india-held-kashmir>

Pakistan urges India to resolve Kashmir issue under UN

The Nation, 17 February 2023

Pakistan urged India to resolve Jammu and Kashmir dispute following the United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR). While speaking at a weekly news briefing, Foreign

Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan will continue to extend political, diplomatic, and moral support to the Kashmiris. She claimed that 'the human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) continue unabated.' According to the reports, she said, a young Kashmiri, Sham-suddin son of Jamaluddin, died at an interrogation center in Udhampur after he was subjected to torture that he had to endure since his arrest from his house about a month ago. Shamsuddin was neither the first nor the only incident of a Kashmiri youth who had gone missing and was believed to have been killed in 'custody or fake encounters.' She added that we have been raising our 'concerns about the custodial deaths in IIOJK' and that those responsible for such inhumane acts and human rights violations must be held to account.

Baloch further said the issue of 'illegal settlements' in 'IIOJK' and India's efforts to change the demographic structure of the 'occupied territory' was an illegal act and that we have reiterated this position time and again, including in my last briefing which focused on this particular aspect. She said these acts were a violation of international law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention that interdicts the 'occupation forces' to make any material change in the demographic structure of the 'occupied territory.' Baloch said Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had addressed letters to the Secretary General of OIC, the

Secretary General of the United Nations, the President of the United Nations Security Council, and the President of the United Nations General Assembly only this month. In these letters, he has highlighted the grave violations of human rights in 'IIOJK' and the illegal and unilateral steps being taken by India since 5th August 2019. She further said that we also are encouraged by the recent statements and resolutions of the OIC including at the Council of Foreign Ministers and Senior officials.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/17-Feb-2023/pakistan-urges-india-to-resolve-kashmir-issue-under-un>

Economic Developments

SBP to issue a license to Bank of 'AJK'

Pakistan Today, 13 February 2023

Jameel Ahmed, the governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), expressed appreciation for the work done by the Bank of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (BAJK) to earn Scheduled Bank status and expressed his agreement with the idea to grant 'BAJK' a license. The governor of SBP expressed these opinions in a meeting with Abdul Majid Khan, chairman of 'BAJK,' and President/CEO Khawar Saeed. In addition, he noted that it is not impossible to forecast that this bank would soon rank among the most prosperous ones, noting that the government financial institution of 'AJK' are contributing positively to the state's socioeconomic development and the way 'BAJK' is going towards rapid progress is appreciable.

The 'AJK' minister for finance, cooperatives, and Inland Revenue, Abdul Majid Khan, who is also the Chairman of the Bank's Board of Directors, highlighted the importance of 'BAJK' in the state economy, the association and interest of overseas Kashmiri diaspora with the institution. While referring to the usefulness of issuance of a license for conferring scheduled status, he said that the recent steps taken in this regard by 'AJK' governments and 'BAJK' to develop and attain scheduled bank status, including notable, implementation of core banking software, redesigning of all credit products, hiring of a consultant for completion of legal formalities and preparation of the business case for lodgment of application with SBP, especially overseas Kashmiri diaspora and corporate sector of 'AJK' for 'BAJK' to acquire scheduled bank status are appreciable.

The chairman further said that the 'BAJK' needs the development and patronage of the federal government. The Bank needs to be included in the Government of Pakistan's Special Incentives Schemes like hydropower, tourism, women's economic empowerment, agriculture, and housing sector, which will accelerate further growth. In addition, the nomination of a focal person from SBP to assist/guide 'BAJK' in obtaining licensing while opening the corporate office of the bank in Islamabad will have positive business results. Earlier, the Governor was briefed by President

Khawar Saeed on the history of the state-owned bank, its management structure, rapid development, and the status of financial progress during the last three years including expanding network, customer reach, and paid-up capital. The governor agreed in principle on the position of 'BAJK' to achieve scheduled bank status and appreciated the performance and measures taken by the management of 'BAJK.'

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/02/13/sbp-to-issue-license-to-bank-of-azad-jammu-and-kashmir/>

Flour crisis worsens in 'AJK'

Daily Times, 13 February 2023

As a result of a lack of wheat in some areas of the state and reports of stampedes in other places, the 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) is currently experiencing its worst-ever flour crisis. Numerous conflicts have been reported as thousands of people gathered around vehicles and shove each other, creating violent situations, to obtain the subsidized sacks of flour that are already in short supply on the market. While the price of flour in Bagh, Azad Kashmir, ranges from Rs 90 to Rs 110 per kilogram. District Bagh needs 3300 Tons of wheat flour, but the Food Ministry only supplies the district with 2400 Tons of wheat. The people of Bagh have urged the Kashmiri administration to fulfill the requirements for wheat as soon as possible. The residents have complained about a shortage of wheat flour and have urged the government

to resolve the issue by supplying flour at a reduced price. According to a local of Muzafarabad, both the wealthy and the poor are concerned about wheat flour. The resident added that a person can purchase flour only once a week. The situation has angered entire people in Kashmir as the tandoors have also increased the price of bread. Apart from bread, all the bakery items are being sold at a high price. Thousands of people have to spend hours every day to get the subsidized bags that are already short in supply. Moreover, prices of all food items and other commodities have increased over the past couple of years and the governments have taken no measures to control the situation.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1062414/flour-crisis-worsens-in-ajkl/>

Interior Minister visits Diamer Basha Dam project

Pakistan today, 13 February 2023

The minister of the Interior, Rana Sanaullah Khan visited Diamer Basha Dam Project (DBDP), being constructed on the River Indus, 40-Kilometre downstream of Chilas town. He was accompanied by Federal Secretary Interior Yousaf Naseem Khokhar, chairman of Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Engineer Lt Gen (Retd) Sajjad Ghani and National Coordinator, National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) Muhammad Tahir Rai. The visit was aimed at assessing the overall security scenario on the mega multi-purpose project, which is of vital

significance for national development in the years ahead. The chief secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Imdad Ullah Bosal, chief secretary of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, IG Police KP Akhtar Hayat Khan, IG Police Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Saeed Wazir, Home Secretary KP Khushal Khan, Home Secretary GB Iqbal Hussain, among others including the representatives of the consultants and the contractors were also present on the occasion.

During the briefing, the minister was apprised in detail about the security arrangements, which are in place to facilitate smooth construction work on different sites in the project area. While addressing the meeting, the federal minister said that the scheduled completion of DBDP was directly linked with the safe and congenial environment at the project sites, and that could only be made possible by enforcing well-thought-out and coherent security plans in the project area. Earlier, the federal minister reviewed the construction activities and security arrangements at the work site. The DBD will have a gross water storage capacity of 8.1 Million Acre-Foot (MAF) to irrigate 1.23 million acres of additional land and it will have an installed power generation capacity of 4,500 MW and provide 18 billion units of green and clean hydel electricity to the National Grid per annum. A sum of Rs.78.5 billion is being spent on the resettlement of affected CBMs in health, education, and infrastructure development. Thor Hydel Power

Station, Thak Hydel Power Station, and Cadet College Chilas are among these which fall under CBMs. In addition, the locals are being accorded priority in employment opportunities on DBD Project. The schedule for the completion of DBDP is 2029.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/02/13/interior-minister-visits-diamer-basha-dam-project/>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Human rights abuses in Indian 'occupied Kashmir' have not been stopped, and Muslims in the region feel unsafe

UrduPoint, 13 February 2023

The 'illegal demolition' of Hurriyat leaders' and Kashmiri Muslims' homes has been turned into a new weapon by the Modi government. Hurriyat leader Qazi Yasir's shops in Anantnag were vandalized and it was ruled unlawful and destroyed. India's violations of human rights in 'occupied Kashmir' could not be stopped and facts show that Muslims are once again in danger Muslims in 'occupied Kashmir.' Shabir Shah, a leader of the Hurriyat movement, had his home and office illegally taken in Srinagar before the recent 'illegal confiscation' of the Hurriyat leader's homes and land by the Indian government. Moreover, the Modi administration 'illegally razed' 300 students' homes while enforcing collective punishment in June 2022 in response to protests by Muslim students in Delhi against the National Register of Citizens (NRC). House demolitions were deemed a grave

violation of human rights by Amnesty International and various human rights organizations assert that the Indian government must immediately halt these cruel practices and provide compensation to the victims. Why are only Muslims the targets of hate crimes? Doesn't the world media actively support 'Hindutva fanaticism' in India because of their horrible silence?

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/kashmir/live-news-3471624.html>

Youth played a memorable part in the freedom movement: Attique Ahmed Khan

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 15 February 2023

Attique Ahmed Khan, the former prime minister and president of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, claimed that even before Pakistan was founded, the Muslim Conference had a destiny tied to Pakistan. He claimed that the religious and ideological bonds between the people of Pakistan and Kashmir cannot be severed by any force in the world, and added that the youth's contribution to the independence movement from the very beginning is legendary. He made these comments while speaking at a gathering about Kashmir's solidarity day that was held at Punjab College in Rawalpindi. He said that Kashmir is Pakistan's Juglar vein and while a person may be able to survive if any other portion of their body is damaged if their Juglar vein is damaged, their entire body will be

paralyzed. Quaid-e-Azam declared that Kashmir is the jugular vein and hence the route of life and death for Pakistan. For 75 years, he claimed, India has continued to 'occupy Kashmir' without the consent of the inhabitants and added that India needs to keep its promises to the UN and the Kashmiri people. After India's 'illegal act' on 5 August 2019, the situation in 'occupied Kashmir' has gotten much worse, and the Kashmiri people, he claimed, had out-rightly rejected 'India's illegal' and unilateral activities.

He claimed that the Muslim Conference had always supported Kashmiris wholeheartedly and stood by them in all forums and stressed that the people of 'occupied Kashmir' will not remain mute in the face of 'Indian brutality.' As a result of the Indian 'occupying forces' denying Kashmiris of their rights and committing 'crimes' against them, 'occupied Kashmir' has become the most militarized territory in the world, with more than 9 lacks 'occupying Indian forces' stationed there. He claimed that Kashmiris will continue to live in perpetual fear as long as Indian forces use 'indiscriminate force' during the siege and search operations, 'extrajudicial deaths,' 'unlawful imprisonment,' torture, and property confiscation. He said that the peace in South Asia would be at peril if the Kashmir dispute is not resolved by the international community.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Resize-of-B-16.jpg>

Hurriyat Conference protest March against the violent actions of the 'fascist Indian government' in front of the Indian High Commission

UrduPoint, 15 February 2023

The All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) protested in front of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad against the 'brutal actions' of the PM Narendra Modi-led 'fascist' Indian government, including the eviction of Kashmiris from their homes and lands in 'occupied' Jammu and Kashmir. Several Pakistan and 'Azad Kashmir' political parties' leaders participated in the protest demonstration, along with Mahmood Ahmed Sagar, the convener of the APHC for 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' (AJK), Sheikh Abdul Mateen, the APHC general secretary, and others.

The protesters shouted anti-Indian slogans and stated that they would continue their fight until 'occupied Kashmir' was completely independent of India. The protesters alleged that demographic changes are being made and Kashmiris were being forcibly removed from their homes and their lands were being taken without their consent and given to Hindus. The protesters said that by removing Kashmir's special status, non-Kashmiris were being granted residency cards while Kashmiris were being uprooted from their lands and home.

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/national-news/live-news-3474201.html>

The Hindutva government of India has to free the Hurriyat leaders and end the false charges: MQM leader

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The whole Hurriyat leadership, including Yasin Malik, should be freed by the 'Hindutva government', according to Mohammad Tahir Khokhar, a former parliamentary leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and minister of transport, tourism, and sports. According to him, India cannot quiet Yasin Malik and the Kashmiris by imprisoning them on 'bogus and fraudulent allegations'; added that they will continue to speak out in support of the Hurriyat leadership. Malik, he said, is a resource for the entire Kashmiri nation.

He claimed that the Hurriyat will not be eliminated from politics by the BJP government and that, in the name of anti-encroachment, the Modi government is 'snatching' the valuable lands, properties, and possessions of the downtrodden Kashmiris. He claimed that two lakh hectares of Kashmiri land have been taken by the Indian 'occupation force' in an Israeli-style operation and added that the Indian 'occupying forces' in 'occupied Kashmir' had begun seizing agricultural land as part of a sinister scheme to damage the local population's economy. These agricultural fields are being taken over and turned into army camps. He said that Pakistan will continue to stand behind Kashmiris morally, politically, and diplomatically and that India should free political prisoners and

spare the lives of Kashmiris. The day of Kashmiris' independence is rapidly approaching, he claimed, since the region has become a jail and atrocities against them have grown.

He asserted that Kashmiris are the victims of 'state terrorism' and that 'Azad Kashmir' nations have highlighted their nonviolent struggle and the atrocities committed against them on all available platforms and will continue to do so in the future. India is employing pellet guns to blind Kashmiris in 'occupied Kashmir' and has detained 13,000 youths in the past year, and there have been more cases of 'sexual harassment' of women. The world should take notice of these 'criminal' acts. He claimed that India is imitating its teacher Israel in its 'persecuting of minorities' by carrying out 'genocide-like activities,' sowing seeds of hatred throughout Indian society, blocking minorities from doing business, and using violence against minorities. He stressed that the unlawful siege of Kashmiris should cease, the media restriction should be lifted, significant human rights violations should stop, curfews shouldn't be implemented, and access to foreign media should be granted in 'occupied Kashmir' just as it is in 'Azad Kashmir.' He said that it is necessary to lift the ban on the internet and social media, put an end to 'crimes' against women and children, open educational institutions, and permit political activity and added that MQM would take on every responsibility in the effort to 'free Kashmir.'

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-3474257.html>

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Disclaimer

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