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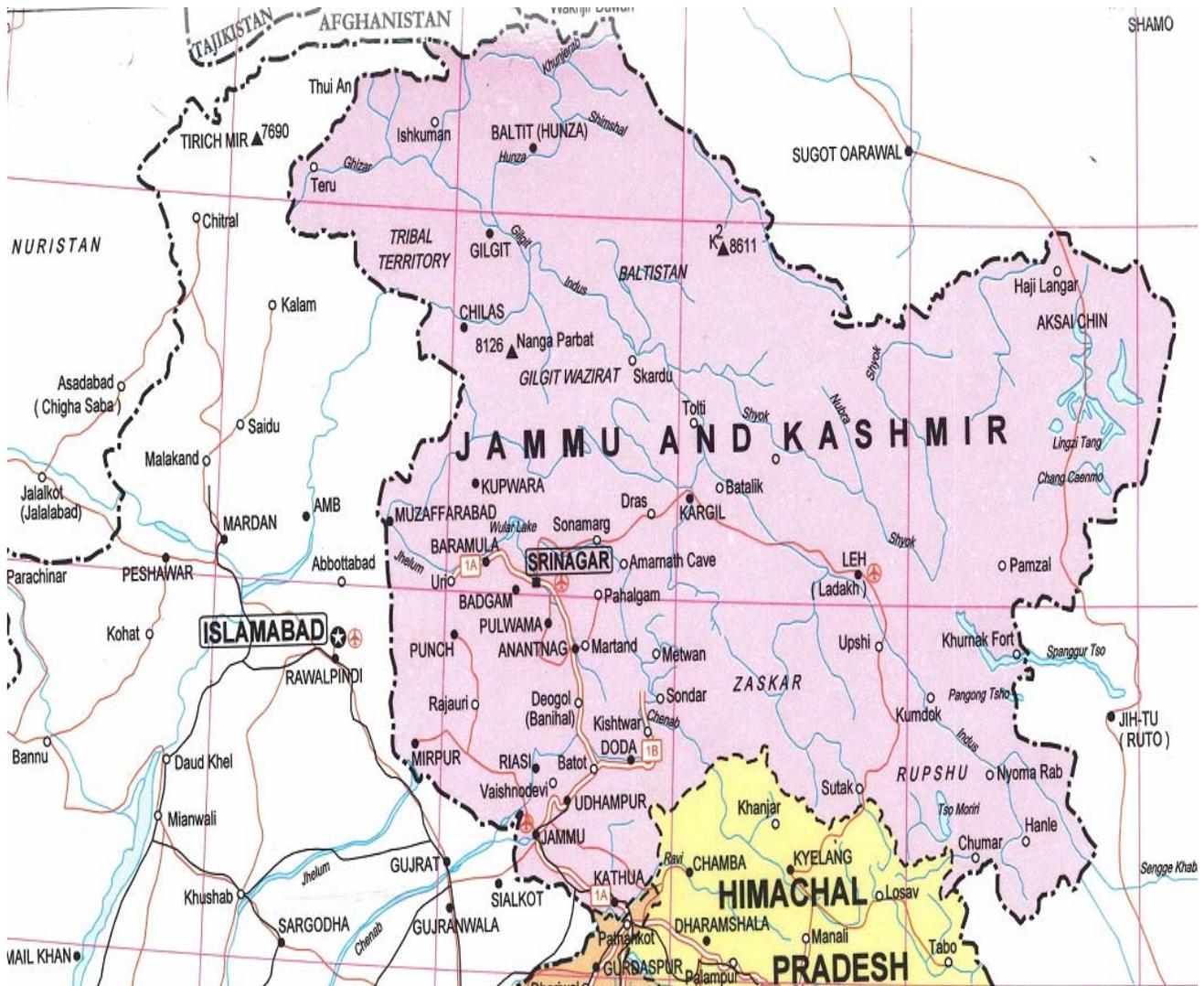
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Jammu & Kashmir

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

About this Issue

The quest for a well defined political status continues in the 'Northern Areas.' The Karachi Agreement has been vehemently criticized all across on account of its failure to ensure basic political and economic rights for the people of this region. Political groups such GBUM and BNF consider Pakistan's control over these areas as illegitimate and seek independent status. A new constitutional package has been promised by the government of Pakistan as is indicated in one of the reports in this issue. Ironically, such packages in the past have been of little value in availing fundamental rights for the deprived sections of population.

There is prevailing dilemma in the judicial system of the so called 'AJK' on whether the Supreme Court of Pakistan has jurisdiction over 'AJK' cases. There is infighting amongst judges in 'AJK' regarding seniority and related issues which explains the absence of proper justice and order.

China is making the most of this political perplexity and investing heavily to strengthen its ground in the region known to be economically viable for its trading activities. With Pakistan, it is in the process of exploring more avenues in the 'Northern Areas' for eco tourism leading to economic development.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

“Gilgit Baltistan: Creating Harmony” May 22, 2009

SKARDU: Chairman of the Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement (GBUM) Manzoor Hussain Parwana stated nationalist parties are inching towards achieving their objectives with the support of the masses of the region. He stated this while addressing a meeting of the GBUM's supreme council. He said the people of Gilgit-Baltistan had foiled the conspiracy to create a lawless situation in the region after the murder of NALA deputy speaker Asad Zaidi. He said his party was playing a major role in building regional, communal and political harmony in the region. By turning up in large numbers at a meeting of the GBUM in Skardu on May 1, the people of the region had proved that no force can divide them to achieve their vested interest.

(<http://www.unpo.org/content/view/9615/254/>)

“NALA should pass coming package: PM,” Weekly Baang, May 19-25, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani directed the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (KANA) to propose a comprehensive package to address the problems of the people of Northern Areas to be approved by the cabinet. Gilani assured a delegation of the Northern Areas consisting of Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA) Speaker Malik Maskin, PML-Q's in-charge for the region Marvi Memon, adviser on health Haji Abdul Quddus, adviser works Ibrahim Sanai, adviser finance Mirza Hussain and others of his support on various administrative, political and development issues relating to the region during a meeting in Islamabad. Sources stated the prime minister agreed that the issue of constitutional rights of the people of the Northern Areas needed immediate attention and the government would give preference to an Azad Jammu and Kashmir-like government in Northern Areas under its proposed package. On the issue of changing the name of Northern Areas to Gilgit-Baltistan as per resolutions of the NALA, Gilani assured the issue

would be taken up in the cabinet committee meeting. He also ordered the PIA to increase daily flights to Gilgit and Skardu from two to three daily to lessen the problems of the people and facilitate the tourists.

(http://weeklybaang.blogspot.com/2009/05/weekly-baang-karachi-volume-02-issue-13_20.html)

“Mismanagement haunts new AJK Govt,” May 26, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Yaqub Khan is leading state to confusion, chaos and anarchy. His rule is no different from his predecessor Sardar Attiq Ahmed Khan Sardar Yaqub's administration assumed office in January 2009, after ouster of Attiq Ahmed Khan through a no-confidence move. Soon after he took power, Mr Khan promised he would administer justice, provide good governance, uphold merit, and rid the state from nepotism, favoritism, menace of deep-rooted corruption and Bardarism. Corruption practices, nepotism, favoritism, blackmailing, mismanagement, injustices, misuse of authority, violation of merit, discrimination govern Azad Kashmir.

(<http://apnarawalkot.blogspot.com/2009/05/mismanagement-haunts-new-ajk-govt.html>)

“Police oppression continues against lawyers in Muzaffarabad,” May 24, 2009

MUZAFFARABAD: Kashmir National Party Spokesman Dr Shabbir Chaudhry strongly condemned police action against unarmed civilians, lawyers and journalists in Muzaffarabad which continued, despite widespread anger and resentment against the authorities. According to reports, local police demonstrated power when they charged against peaceful demonstration, which was organised by the lawyers and supported by the civil society of Muzaffarabad.

(<http://www.tmcnet.com/submit/-police-oppression-continues-against-lawyers-muzaffarabad-/2009/05/24/4194107.htm>)

“Raja Zulqarnain seek British MPs help on Kashmir,” Associated Press of Pakistan, May 21, 2009

LONDON: Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Raja Zulqarnain Khan pleaded for the continuous support of the members of the British Parliament for the Kashmir cause and said the people of the State must not be denied their right to self-determination. Speaking at the House of Commons last night on discussion organised by Jammu and Kashmir Self-Determination Movement, he spoke against putting Kashmir issue on the back burner. He urged the British Parliamentarians to play their due role in helping to resolve the issue as the Kashmir dispute is a legacy of the colonial rule and the UK has a special responsibility in this issue.

(http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=76638&Itemid=2)

“Saleem sees no Talibanisation threat in AJK,” May 22, 2009

KARACHI : Acting President Azad Kashmir Saleem Butt on May 21 visited the MQM headquarter Nine Zero, where the MQM provincial minister Shoaib Ahmed Bukhari and other members including Anees Ahmed Kaimkhani, Waseem Aftab, Kanwar Khalid Younis, Ashfaq Mangi, Saleem Tajik and office bearers of MQM were also present. To a query about the presence of Taliban in Azad Kashmir, he said that there was no threat of Talibanisation in Kashmir, adding that AJK government has extended its full support to the government of Pakistan against Talibanisation.

(<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Karachi/22-May-2009/Saleem-sees-no-Talibanisation-threat-in-AJK>)

“PM directs immediate release of funds for Gilgit-Baltistan,” Dardistan Times, May 14, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza

on May 14 directed the Ministry of Finance to release development and compensation funds allocated for the Northern Areas with immediate effect. Talking to a delegation of Northern Areas comprising members of Northern Areas Legislative Assembly led by Speaker NALA at the PM House, the prime minister also ordered to expedite construction of Gilgit-Baltistan road. The delegation also apprised him on various administrative, political and development issues of the area. The Prime Minister directed the Ministry of Kashmir and Northern Areas (KANA) to present these issues in the Committee on Northern Areas Governance Regulations. He further noted the final summary in this regard should be put up before the cabinet for approval.

(<http://dardistannews.wordpress.com/2009/05/14/pm-directs-immediate-release-of-funds-for-gilgit-baltistan/>)

Sayed Abid Hussain, “Intra-Kashmir Conference in Islamabad on June 2-3,” The News, May 17, 2009

MIRPUR: An exclusive Intra-Kashmir Conference on the ongoing trans-LoC trade would be held in Islamabad on June 2 and 3. Disclosing this, President Federation of Jammu & Kashmir Chambers of Commerce & Industry, an apex body of all the chambers of commerce and industry of J&K and AJK, Zulfiqar Abbasi stated on May 15 that the scheduled meet is being organised with special focus on discussing issues for promotion of the ongoing weekly cross-LoC trade between Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Indian occupied Kashmir, besides other related issues to promote humanitarian ties between both sides of the LoC.

(http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=177981)

Usman Manzoor, “AJK judges bring their case before CJ Iftikhar,” May 17, 2009

ISLAMABAD: After the senior judge of the AJK Supreme Court, another judge has moved to the

Pakistan Supreme Court to seek justice hoping that the restored judiciary will do justice. The acting chief justice of the AJK High Court has now knocked at the doors of Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry's court asking it to direct the federal government to rectify the previous wrongs. It has happened for the first time in the history of Pakistan that AJK's superior judiciary judges have moved to the Supreme Court of Pakistan, asking the apex court to direct the prime minister of Pakistan, who also happens to be the AJK Council's chairman and whose advise of appointing the chief justices of superior judiciary of AJK was binding on the AJK president, to undo the unconstitutional orders that have created a mess in the superior judiciary.

(<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=178027>)

Siddharth Varadarajan, "Gilgit leaders deny they are Indian agents," May 18, 2009

GILGIT: Being a nationalist in this region is to lay yourself open to the charge of being an Indian agent. Despite this, there is no shortage of groups speaking of self-determination for Gilgit-Baltistan. "Ten years ago", noted a local journalist, "nobody here wanted to hear the name 'Kashmir', everybody was for merger with Pakistan. Today, the mood has changed to one of self-determination rather than merger."

(<http://gbtribune.blogspot.com/2009/05/gilgit-leaders-deny-they-are-indian.html>)

Zaresh Khan "Bhasha Dam and Foreign Involvement," Kashmir Watch, May 19, 2009

Dams are an instrument of development, yet every dam small or large carries inherent risks of failure. In the case of a larger dam it could be catastrophic for life and property down the valley. Large dams are therefore planned and designed with utmost care to preclude as far as possible any risk of a failure. Keeping in view the risk factor and the growing population of Pakistan (estimated at 170 million at the start of 2009), the proposal of Bhasha dam was regulated on 17 January 2006. Inhabitants of the area welcomed the government proposal being truly

patriotic.

The project of Bhasha Dam is located on Indus River, about 315 km upstream of Tarbela Dam, 165 km downstream of the Northern Area capital Gilgit and 40 km downstream of Chilas. The proposed dam would have a maximum height of 270 m, and impound a reservoir of about 7,500,000 acre feet (9.25×10⁹ m³), with live storage of more than 6,400,000 acre feet (7.89×10⁹ m³). Mean annual discharge of Indus River at the site is 50,000,000 acre feet (6.2×10¹⁰ m³). Thus the dam will impound 15% of the annual river flow. The dam project would cover an area of 110 km² and extend 100 km upstream of the dam site up to Raikot Bridge on Karakoram Highway (KKH). The planned 4,500 MW Diamer-Bhasha Dam on the Indus in Pakistan is, at US\$12.6 billion, one of the largest and most costly planned dams in the world.

(http://www.kashmirwatch.com/indus-dam-bhasha-dam-127399&ie=utf8&utm_source=delve)

"Gilgit Baltistan: Enemy wants to eliminate us," May 13, 2009

SKARDU: Speakers at a public gathering organized by the Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement (GBUM) and the Balawaristan National Front (BNF) in Skardu stated unseen forces have started conspiracies to create tension and pitch people against each other in the region. They said the conspiracy was aimed to eliminate the identity of the masses of Gilgit-Baltistan and paralyze their ability to rise for their rights.

(<http://skardu.blogspot.com/2009/05/gilgit-baltistan-enemy-wants-to.html>)

Ayesha Siddiqi, "Deadly social change," Dawn, May 1, 2009

A look at today's Pakistan does not inspire confidence in the state. In addition to the Talibanisation threat in some parts of the country, there is chaos in other areas like Balochistan where people are dissatisfied with what the state has to offer. Then, there are those areas where there is no conflict but that have begun to look at other options because the state has little to

offer. In fact, in places like Gilgit sections of the people are beginning to look north, towards China, which now appears a more attractive proposition. The state and the establishment have little to offer by way of explanation except that this is a conspiracy to destroy the state.

(<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/columnists/16-ayeshasiddiq-deadly-social-change-hs-05>)

Nawaz Khan Naji, “Students Should Play a Role for Gilgit-Baltistan,” Dardistan Times, May 12, 2009

Members of BNSO Rawalpindi/Islamabad Division held a conference chaired by Nawaz Khan Naji, a nationalist leader from Gilgit Baltistan. In his address, he urged the younger generation, especially students, to play their part of role to bring the disfranchised region out of the gloomy political shadow. He spotlighted that Gilgit Baltistan is passing through tough time and students can boldly navigate the nation through the turbulence of 21st century.

(<http://dardistannews.wordpress.com/2009/05/12/students-should-play-a-role-for-gilgit-baltistan-nawaz-khan-naji/>)

“AJKSC CJ appointment challenged in SC”

ISLAMABAD: The most senior judge of Supreme Court AJK Syed Manzoor Hussain Gilani has challenged the appointment Justice Riaz Akhtar Chaudhry as Chief Justice Supreme Court AJK on the basis of seniority. Justice Gilani’s lawyers Akram Chaudhry Advocate and Arshad Ali Chaudhry filed the petition stating that the incumbent Chief Justice, who was six year junior in High Court and two years in the Supreme Court AJK as against the petitioner, was directed to be appointed as CJ of AJKSC on the advice of then prime minister of Pakistan Shaukat Aziz on October 20, 2006 within 24 days of his appointment as judge of the AJKSC.

(<http://www.sananews.com.pk/english/2009/05/07/ajksc-cj-appointment-challenged-in-sc/>)

“SC can’t hear AJK cases,” Daily Times, May 08, 2009

MIRPUR: The Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan has no legal and constitutional jurisdiction to hear any case related to Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Mirpur District Bar Association (MDBA) stated on May 7. MDBA President Khalid Yousuf noted that the SC couldn’t hear plea challenging AJK Supreme Court’s Chief Justice Riaz Akhtar’s appointment due to the territory’s separate constitutional status and identity.

(http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C05%5C08%5Cstory_8-5-2009_pg7_35)

“Judicial crisis being plotted in AJK, warns Atiq,” The News, May 11, 2009

MIRPUR: Former Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Sardar Atiq Ahmed stated some anti Pakistan elements are bent upon plotting judicial crisis in Azad Kashmir after hatching a successful conspiracy in terms of political instability and all this will surely bring about the dire consequences.

Talking to media in Mirpur, Sardar Atiq was of the view that the petition filed against the Chief Justice (CJ) AJK by a senior judge of Supreme Court (SC) in SC of Pakistan was unconstitutional. He added Azad Kashmir is an independent and liberated state of the world carrying its own constitution, president, assembly, SC and High Court (HC).

(<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=77296>)

“Illegal appointments in Azad Kashmir,” Kashmir Watch

ISLAMABAD: Authorities in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) were accused of violating constitution of the state by appointing non-state subjects on different positions. The issue was several appointments in Project Management Unit of three-city development projects-Bagh, Muzaffarabad and Rawalakote. The appointments of non-state to a

post unless he is a state subject as defined in Azad Jammu Kashmir interim constitution Act, 1974, provided that this restriction may be relaxed by government in suitable cases, as stated in state services rules.

(<http://www.kashmirwatch.com/india.php?in=1&id=2430&cat=5&fm=5&news=delw>)

“Karachi Accord a tool to control Gilgit-Baltistan,” Weekly Baang, May 5-11, 2009

GILGIT: Neither we want an Azad Kashmir-like setup nor a provincial status. Our main demand is the resolution of our region’s dispute in accordance with the UN resolutions and setting up of an independent constituent assembly besides abolition of the so-called Karachi agreement. These views emerged during seminars and public gatherings held to condemn the 1949 agreement of Karachi in Gilgit, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Abbottabad. The events were organized by the Balawaristan National Students Organizations. This was stated by speakers at a protest rally arranged here by Gilgit-Baltistan Democratic Alliance (GBDA) on the anniversary of the infamous Karachi Agreement.

(<http://weeklybaang.blogspot.com/2009/05/weekly-baang-karachi-volume-02-issue.html>)

“APHC-AJK pays homage to Kashmiri martyrs,” Pakistan Times

ISLAMABAD: The APHC-AJK Chapter organised a function in Islamabad on the occasion of the martyrdom anniversaries of prominent liberation leaders Mirwaiz Moulvi Muhammad Farooq and Khawaja Abdul Ghani Lone. The AJK Prime Minister, Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan presided over the function and senior APHC leader Maulana Abbas Ansari was the chief guest.

(<http://www.pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=851>)

Economic Developments

“ADB to provide PKR 56.59 billion for AJK projects,” May 11, 2009

APP reported that the Asian Development Bank would provide PKR 56.59 billion for different development projects. The funds would be utilized for AJK development projects including hydel power generation, highways, communication and other sectors. This was disclosed by Mr Chaudhry Latif Akbar, Finance Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir while chairing a high level meeting.

The meeting was attended by Mr Reom Stroem, Country Director of Asian Development Bank, Mr Muhammad Yousuf, Additional Chief Secretary for Development and secretaries of different departments.

(http://steelguru.com/news/index/2009/05/11/OTM5MTA%3D/ADB_to_provide_PKR_56.59_billion_for_AJK_projects.html)

Iftikhar Gilani “Better infrastructure soon to increase volume of cross-LoC trade,” Daily Times, May 07, 2009

NEW DELHI: A high-level meeting in Srinagar reviewed trade across the Line of Control (LoC) on May 6 and decided a host of measures to facilitate the volume of trade. Giving details of the meeting, an official spokesman stated the vehicles carrying goods to either Rawlakot or Muzaffarabad would now have to report at both the Trade Facilitation Centres (TFCs) a day in advance by 11:30am to facilitate custodian authorities to unload and reload cargo before the time fixed for departure.

(http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C05%5C07%5Cstory_7-5-2009_pg7_41)

Sayed Abid Hussain, “Suspension of cross-LoC trade sparks worry,” The News, May 01, 2009

MIRPUR: Federation of Jammu & Kashmir Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FKCCI) President Zulfiqar Abbasi on April 30 expressed concern over reported suspension of trade between

the two sides of the Line of Control, AJK and Jammu & Kashmir, following hostile and negative attitude of the authorities. “Apprehensions of the Kashmiri business community on both sides about the future of cross-LoC trade have started emerging true because of undue bureaucratic hurdles,” Abbasi stated while talking to a group of senior journalists in Mirpur. Trans-LoC trade between AJK and J&K started on October 21, 2008 as a result of an agreement reached between India and Pakistan.

(http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=175256)

“Pakistan: Erra to spend Rs 4.5 billion on water projects,” WASH news Asia & Pacific, May 13, 2009

Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (Erra) will spend Rs 4.5 billion (€ 41.2 million = US\$ 56.1 million) on clean drinking water projects in quake affected areas during the next one and half year. According to the sources, the funds would be spent in the affected areas on potable water projects while state-of-the-art testing laboratories would also be established in Mansehra, Abbottabad, Battagram and Mingora.

(<http://washasia.wordpress.com/2009/05/13/pakistan-erra-to-spend-rs-4-5-billion-on-water-projects/>)

“CDWP approves development projects valued at Rs 9.76bn,” Pakistan Business News

ISLAMABAD: The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) on Monday approved 10 development projects valued at Rs 9.76 billion. For the environment sector, the government sanctioned an integrated land management project for AJK, Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Poonch, with a value of Rs 468.02 million. In addition to the 10 projects, the CDWP conceptually cleared a project for the construction and planning of rural access roads in the country, likely to cost Rs 29.97 billion.

(<http://thecurrentaffairs.com/index.php/pakistan-business-news-cdwp-approves-development-projects-valued-at-rs-976bn/>)

Sayed Abid Hussain “LoC trade crosses Rs43m in a week,” The News, May 23, 2009

MIRPUR: Weekly cross-LoC trade between AJK and occupied Kashmir on Poonch-Rawalakot route has jumped to Rs43.2 million, an all-time high, as a Kashmir-based firm started trade from this route ignoring the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad route, stated a report.

(http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=179008)

Hameed Shaheen, “Intra-Kashmir trade volume to grow,” Pakistan Observer, May 25, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Seeing genuine enthusiasm in traders’ communities on both sides of the Line of Control (LOC) in Jammu and Kashmir, respective authorities agreed to increase the intra-Kashmir trade volume, reports stated. Under a bilateral accord reached between President Asif Ali Zardari and Indian Premier Manmohan Singh in New York on September 26, 2008, both Pakistan and India had allowed intra-Kashmir trade which went operational on October 21, 2008. The present operative trade routes are Muzaffarabad-Srinagar and Poonch-Rawalakot.

Since its start, the barter intra-Kashmir trade this far has crossed the monetary volume of over Rs.40 million per week. The items included in the expandable trade list are local Kashmiri farm products and handicrafts.

(<http://pakobserver.net/200905/25/news/topstories07.asp>)

International Developments

“UNICEF admits cheating children in Kashmir,” Kashmir Watch, May 17, 2009

UNICEF admitted that it distributed hundreds of thousands low quality blankets to children who survived October 8, 2005 earthquake. These blankets were distributed during the winter season in the year 2006-almost a year after the earthquake. It was first pointed out in November 2006 that the UN agency was giving out low quality blankets to earthquake survivors. On November 27,2006, Ainga Razafy-the then logistic officer UNICEF Islamabad-pointed out in her email to Anna Spindler the then logistic officer UNICEF field office Muzaffarabad-that blankets were not of a good quality.

([http://www.kashmirwatch.com/
story.php?id=17&id=2597&date=2009-05-18&news=del](http://www.kashmirwatch.com/story.php?id=17&id=2597&date=2009-05-18&news=del))

“Pakistan, China working on clean development mechanism,” Daily Times, May 12, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China will enhance cooperation to devise a clean development mechanism and establish protected areas in Khunjerab National Park (KNP) in Pakistan and Taxkorgan Nature Reserve (TNR) in China. The two endorsed the idea that scientists of both countries should promote exchange of information on key wildlife species and their habitats in the border region and that they should also explore possibilities for promoting eco-tourism in areas between Kashghar and Gilgit as a tool for economic development.

([http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/
default.asp?page=2009%5C05%5C12%5Cstory_12-5-
2009_pg11_8](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C05%5C12%5Cstory_12-5-2009_pg11_8))

“OIC reaffirms support to Kashmir struggle,” May 26, 2009

DAMASCUS: The OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir met on the sidelines of the 36th CFM in Damascus, Syrian Capital. The meeting was chaired by the OIC Secretary General, Mr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu. The Minister of State for

Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Nawabzada Malik Amad Khan led the Pakistan delegation to the meeting. The meeting was also attended by the Foreign Minister of Turkey, and senior representative of Saudi Arabia and Niger. The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir attended the meeting along with the representatives of the Kashmiri People. The meeting was also attended by the delegation of the Special Committee of the Parliament on Kashmir led by Federal Minister Mr. Lal Muhammad Khan.

(<http://pakobserver.net/200905/26/news/topstories13.asp>)

Other Developments

“100,000 forms to be distributed in AJ&K under BBISP,” May 7, 2009

ISLAMABAD: The government has launched form distribution in Azad Jammu & Kashmir under Benazir Bhutto Income Support Programme (BBISP) and 100,000 forms will be distributed under this programme to support impoverished families. According to sources process of distribution of forms will be completed shortly aimed at providing support to identified families as early as possible under Benazir Bhutto Income Support Programme Earlier, each Member of the National Assembly and Senator was provided 8000 forms for distribution amongst deserving people in their respective constituencies under this programmed introduced by the government last year.

(<http://www.tmcnet.com/usubmit/-100000-forms-be-distributed-ajk-under-bbisp-/2009/05/07/4169872.htm>)

“ERRA hiring notorious NGOs for implementation of its project Muzaffarabad,” Kashmir Watch, May 10, 2009

ERRA’s “Drinking Water Quality Improvement and Hygiene Promotion project” stirred up a major controversy after it short-listed “notorious” non-local NGOs for the implementation of the project in earthquake-affected areas. ERRA is implementing 5.6 million US dollar (304 million Pakistani rupees) project with the help of UNICEF and Royal Netherland Embassy (RNE). ERRA is the major partner as it contributing 2.6 million US dollars; 2.5 million US dollars are being contributed by Royal Netherlands and UNICEF is providing 500,000. ERRA, among others, has short-listed National Rural Supports Program (NRSP) and Society for Sustainable Development (SSD) for the implementation of the project.

(<http://www.kashmirwatch.com/story.php?id=12085&title=errra-15&news-deliv>)

(Other Developments continued after Abbreviations)

ABBREVIATIONS

AJKHEB	Azad Jammu and Kashmir Hydro Electric Board
AJK	Azad Jammu & Kashmir
APHC	All Parties Hurriyat Conference
BNF	Balawaristan National Front
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CDP	Community Development Programme
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FBR	Federal Board of Revenue
GBDA	Gilgit-Baltistan Democratic Alliance
GBUM	Gilgit Baltistan United Movement
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
JIAJK	Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Jammu & Kashmir
KAC	Kashmiri American Council
KKH	Karakoram Highway
KNM	Karakoram National Movement
LoC	Line of Control
NLI	Northern Light Infantry
NALA	Northern Areas Legislative Assembly
NAEDC	Northern Areas Executive Development Committee
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PoK	Pakistan Occupied Kashmir
POGB	Pakistan occupied Gilgit Baltistan
PPP	Pakistan Peoples’ Party
UJC	United Jihad Council
WAPDA	Water and Power Development Authority

“AJK glacier collapse kills 28,” The Nation, May 6, 2009

MUZAFFARABAD: At least 28 people were killed when an ice shelf collapsed onto them in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), officials stated on May 5. The incident occurred in Ashkot village in the mountainous Neelam Valley, 65 kilometres north of Muzaffarabad. “A group of 28 people were moving together in Ashkot village when an ice shelf collapsed on them,” senior police official Javed Noor noted.

(<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/06-May-2009/AJK-glacier-collapse-kills-28>)

“ERRA completes reconstruction of 388,949 houses,” Associated press of Pakistan, May 12, 2009

ISLAMABAD: Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) has completed construction of 388,949 houses in quake affected areas of the AJK and NWFP. “All the completed houses were designed as per seismic resistant code approved in wake of devastating earthquake that hit the northern region on October 8, 2005,” sources stated on May 12. “Meanwhile, ERRA has also provided Rs. 64.75 Billions as the rural housing subsidy to the affected,” they added. Sources further claimed that ERRA was working in full swing for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the affected areas both in the NWFP as well as Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

(http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=75829&Itemid=2)

“70 cross LoC as AJK govt refuses to issue fresh permits”

POONCH: As the government of Azad Kashmir (AJK) refused to issue fresh permits to applicants from occupied Kashmir since April 15, a total of 70 persons crossed the Line of Control LoC at Rah-e-Milan in Chakkan-da-Bagh. Official

sources stated that a total of 46 persons from occupied Kashmir crossed over to AJK in which 4 were fresh visitors, who were going AJK to meet their relatives in while 42 persons returned to AJK after meeting their relatives in different parts of Jammu & Kashmir.

(<http://www.sananews.com.pk/english/2009/05/20/70-cross-loc-as-ajk-govt-refuses-to-issue-fresh-permits/>)

Mufti Islah, “Peace bus to connect rest of India to PoK,” CNN-IBN

SRINAGAR: Bus travel across the LoC is now made simpler and open to every Indian. Any person from any part of the country with or without a relative on the other side can now travel on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus. The Ministry of External affairs has done away with the tiresome procedure of verification and re-verification. Instead there will be a triple permit system which means a person with just 2 references from PoK can travel to and fro three times without renewing the documents. Passport officer, J-K B S Manavalan said, “Any Indian can travel on the bus, it was not so earlier. Only thing is that it will be up to PoK authorities whether they issue permit or not.”

(http://ibnlive.in.com/printpage.php?id=93267§ion_id=3)

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir-An Overview

Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), legitimately an integral part of the Indian Union is presently under Pakistan's control. Pakistan occupied the territory as a result of tribal invasion in 1947 engineered by the Pakistani army. It covers one-third of the total area of 86,023 square miles/ 222,236 square kilometers of the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The area under occupation comprises two administrative units: Mirpur- Muzaffarabad and Gilgit Baltistan referred as 'Azad Kashmir' and the 'Northern Areas' respectively by the government of Pakistan. Pakistan ceded a segment (2,700 sq miles) of this occupied territory lying to the north-east border of the Northern Areas known as the Trans Karakoram Tract to China in 1963.

“AZAD KASHMIR”

Pakistan envisaged the Azad Kashmir as a country with a President, a Prime Minister and a Legislature of its own according to the Karachi Agreement of April 28, 1949. These structures and the designations are only titular in nature as this invaded territory is neither a country nor even a province. Significant subjects such as defence, supposed 'foreign policy' of POK, rehabilitation of refugees and the overall control have been carefully placed under the discretion of the political establishment of Pakistan.

Area: 13,297 square km

Mirpur comprises 3 districts: *Bhimber, Kotli, Mirpur*

Muzaffarabad is divided into five districts: *Bagh, Muzaffarabad, Neelum, Poonch, Sudhnati*

Population: 3,271,000 (1.685 million Male, 1.665 million Female)

Capital: Muzaffarabad

“President”: Raja Zulfikar Khan

“Prime Minister”: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan

“Azad Jammu and Kashmir” Council: Total 11 members- 6 from the government of AJK and 5 from the government of Pakistan. The AJK Council is headed by the President AJK.

Legislative Assembly: 49 seats

Tribal population: Awan, Abbasi, Ansari, Gilani, Gujar, Jarral, Jat, Qureshi, Malik, Mughal, Pashtuns, Rajput, Rachyals, Sudhan, Tarkhan

NORTHERN AREAS

The **Northern Areas** officially referred to by the government of Pakistan as the **Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA)**, is the northernmost political entity within the Pakistan occupied part of Kashmir and is a self governing unit under Pakistani control. The area is five times bigger to that of Azad Kashmir. The status of this region being unstated in the successive constitutions of Pakistan over the years, the people are denied basic socio-political and legal rights. The Northern Areas have no representation in the National Assembly and are governed by the Northern Areas Council headed by Minister of Kashmir and Northern Areas. A Judicial Commissioner exercises judicial powers in the absence of a High Court. The population mainly comprises Shia, Sunni and Ismaili Muslims. Ethnic groups include Baltees, Shinas, Vashkuns, Mughals, Kashmiris, Pathans, Ladhakhis and Turks.

Governor/ Commissioner: Imran Ali

“Chief Minister”: Irfan Ali and Shahid Hussain

Legislature: Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (29 seats)

Languages: Balti, Shina, Brushaski, Khawer, Wakhi, Turki, Tibeti, Pushto and Urdu

Area: 72,496 km

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: seven

Baltistan is divided into *Ghanche and Skardu*

Gilgit divided into *Astore, Diamer, Ghizar, Gilgit and Hunza Nagar*

Population: 1.5 million

Political groups: United Jammu and Kashmir Peoples' National Party, Balwaristan National Front (BNF) and Gilgit Baltistan United Action Forum for Self Rule, Gilgit Baltistan United Movement (GBUM).

Literacy rate: 14% male- 3.5% female

State of Infrastructure: No pipelines for water supply and no electricity supply for at least two thirds of the population in Northern Areas.

Disclaimer

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 'Northern Areas' 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.

POK NEWS DIGEST

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