

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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Diamer
infrastructure
POK Gilgit-Baltistan
Karakoram highway
University
Tourism



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

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Political Developments

Muharram processions culminate in Gilgit-Baltistan peacefully

Associated Press of Pakistan, 18 August 2021

All the Ashura processions taken out in Gilgit Baltistan (GB) culminated peacefully after passing through the traditional routes amid tight security arrangements. More than 20 Ashura processions were taken out in different parts of Gilgit-Baltistan. The main procession was taken out from Central Imamia Jamia Masjid Gilgit which after passing through its traditional routes Raja Bazaar, Saddar Bazaar, Jamaat Khana Bazaar, Hospital Road and Khazana Road, culminated at Imamia Jamia Masjid at the time of Maghrib prayers. The mourners offered special prayers at Shaheed Captain Zameer Abbas Chowk.

The strict security arrangements were made on the occasion as more than 1200 Police, Rangers; Gilgit-Baltistan Scouts were deployed. The 100 cameras of Safe City project were installed on the procession routes while Helicopters and drone cameras carried out aerial surveillance of the procession. All entrances and exit points of the city were closed by containers. The cellular network had also been suspended since morning.

Earlier, many senior police officers including the Inspector General of Gilgit-Baltistan had expressed concerns about security in the region during the

first ten days of the holy month of Muharram. There were apprehensions of attacks from external enemies as well as sparking of sectarian tensions.

<https://nation.com.pk/10-Aug-2021/election-commission-of-ajk-issues-schedule-for-presidential-elections>

Three AJK residents arrested by the Indian Army in Poonch

Dawn, 19 August 2021

Arbab Rahim, 13, his sibling Umair Rahim, 11, and Daniyal Malick, 17, had gone to Rangar Nullah in the Taroti area for fishing when six to seven Indian soldiers arrived from across the channel and whisked them away, said Syed Tassawar Kazmi, assistant commissioner of Abbaspur, of which Taroti is a revenue village.

Meanwhile, India's UNI news agency reported that the Indian army had arrested "four boys" from AJK, claiming they might have inadvertently crossed over to their side of the LoC in Poonch district.

The Indian Army later repatriated these AJK citizens a couple of days later. The boys who were carrying sweets and gifts given by the Indian army were examined by doctors on the AJK side before being brought to Abbaspur police station for a formal statement.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2314866/iphrc-concludes-five-day-visit-to-ajk>

Kashmir Premier league to be renamed as 'National T20 league of Kashmir'

Business Recorder, 19 August 2021

The announcement came during a meeting of AJK PM with Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Shehryar Khan Afridi and famous cricketer Shahid Afridi at the AJK PM House. Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi said that the KPL would be spending Rs1 billion on the development of sports in across AJK.

The AJK PM said that Azad Kashmir was base camp of Kashmir Freedom Movement and the martyrs of Kashmiri fighters in the heavens would be happy today. "I myself am a resident of the Line of Control and I know what it takes to challenge the Indian Illegally Occupied regime in Jammu and Kashmir. The KPL was a soft power tool to project Kashmir," he said. "We have dedicated the KPL to the martyrs of Kashmir. I have directed Principal Secretary to name KPL as Official National Cricket League of Kashmir," he added.

The PM also directed Secretary Sports AJK to develop a state of the art cricket academy in Muzaffarabad and name it as Shahid Afridi Cricket Academy. He said that all modern facilities would be provided in cricket academy to harness the skills of Kashmiri youth. A new franchise representing Jammu will be added in the next edition, it was announced.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40114311>

Revolutionary Steps for delivery of quality education, health cover across AJK soon: AJK PM

Urdu Point, 20 August 2021

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi Friday said that revolutionary steps would be taken for the provision of health and education facilities to the people of Azad Jammu Kashmir. Talking to different delegations at Jammu Kashmir House in the Federal metropolis, he said special emphasis will be given for the development of infrastructure to extend better communication facilities to the people.

The AJK Prime Minister said that the Pakistan Prime Minister is taking keen interest in the development of Azad Kashmir with special emphasis on Tourism development to create jobs for the educated youth and added that Prime Minister Pakistan is also taking revolutionary steps to address the basic problems of the people.

He said problems being faced by the people of the state will be redress and accountability process would be started without any discrimination. He said corruption is the great hurdle in the way of development of the country and expressed his intention to carry out an intensive anti-corruption drive.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/kashmir/revolutionary-steps-for-delivery-of-quality-e-1330823.html>

Imran Khan chairs meeting on government reforms in AJK

The News, 21 August 2021

The meeting was attended by Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Ali Amin Gandapur, Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi, Chief Secretary Azad Kashmir and relevant senior officials.

The Azad Kashmir government has formulated a roadmap for economic growth and employment, food security, improved service delivery, institutional reforms and the rule of law. The meeting was informed that a roadmap for major reforms in Azad Kashmir had been prepared, which will be implemented in two phases.

The first phase includes the rehabilitation of sanitation systems in cities, cleaning of drains and elimination of encroachments over a period of six months. Further reforms in the education and health sectors include rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure, rehabilitation of existing electricity and clean water systems.

The implementation of the strategy will be ensured in a timely manner by weekly planning, whereas the second phase involves long-term reforms. Moreover, steps will be taken for economic development and employment generation, industrial development, facilitation of business and promotion of tourism.

The meeting was informed that livestock, floriculture, horticulture and

kitchen gardening would be promoted for food security. Emphasizing the importance of the rule of law, Prime Minister Imran Khan said the law was the same for the rich and the poor in welfare states.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/880900-pm-extends-koi-bhooka-na-soye-programme>

Economic Developments

KKH alternative route to be built in Tatta Pani Area of GB

Daily Advent, 18 August 2021

Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Khalid Khurshid Khan had directed the works department to prepare a feasibility within three days to build a high-quality road from Dharan to Raikot area along the right bank of the Indus River, thus bypassing the landslide-prone Tatta Pani area.

The chief minister said a steel suspension bridge would be installed in Dharan area till an RCC structure was built to ensure smooth flow of traffic. The CM also directed the planning department to convene meetings of relevant forums for early execution of the project.

Following the directives, a joint team of planning and development and works department and Gilgit-Baltistan Disaster Management Authority visited Tatta Pani on 17th of August. Earlier, suggestions regarding building an alternate route at the Karakoram highway near the Tatta Pani area had

been made because of constant blocking of highway at this point.

<https://www.dailyadvent.com/news/63b9569693c8b9ee3af20027a42360ef-KKH-alternative-route-to-be-built-in-Tatta-Pani-area-of-GB>

PM Niazi announces establishment of Cricket Academy in AJK

Urdu Point, 18 August 2021

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi has announced to establishment a cricket academy of international standard to promote sports activities in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The Prime Minister said the first cricket academy will be set up in the name of Shahid Afridi and directed the concerned officials to make necessary arrangements for the setting up of the academy in the state. The PM said, Azad Kashmir is a fortress of peace while in occupied Kashmir more than seven lac Indian forces have cordoned off the entire state of occupied Kashmir and daily life of the people had become miserable at the hands of brute Indian forces.

Speaking at the event, Chairman of Kashmir committee Shehryar Afridi assured the AJK PM that that Federal government would extend all available resources to the Azad Kashmir government for the development of the state.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/ajk-pm-announces-to-establish-cricket-academy-1329473.html>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Karakoram University and GB government sign agreement regarding vocational training of women

Daily K2, 17 August 2021

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Karakoram International University and the Gilgit-Baltistan Provincial Government to promote women's vocational training in Diamer. According to the Directorate of Public Relations, the MoU was signed by Prof. Dr. Ataullah Shah, Vice Chancellor, Karakoram University and Dilshad Bano, Member GB Assembly and Parliamentary Secretary in Karakoram International University to set up Vocational Training Center at Diamer Campus to provide vocational training to local women on campus.

The center will also provide specialist female trainers to train the women in various skills. In this regard, it was decided that a vocational training center would be inaugurated at the Diamer Campus soon so that the women of Diamer could be given professional training. Talking at the signing ceremony of the MoU, Prof. Dr. Ataullah Shah, Vice Chancellor, Karakoram University, said that technical skills courses are a necessity for the society and they should be available along with education and research programs at all Universities and Karakoram University is proud to have made an initiative in this regard.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/3121>

Barrister Sultan Mahmood elected as new AJK president

Daily AUSAAF, 18 August 2021

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaaf's (PTI) Barrister Sultan Mahmood was elected as the president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Tuesday, securing 34 votes against opposition candidate Mian Abdul Waheed's 16, the Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

Mahmood will succeed Sardar Masood Khan as the president whose stipulated constitutional term will come to an end on August 24. Earlier, votes for electing the AJK president were cast during a special session of the legislative assembly, which began after a delay of two hours.

Prior to his nomination as the PTI's candidate for presidential elections, Mahmood was expecting to be nominated as the prime ministerial candidate for leading the party to a sweeping success in AJK. He, however, faced a setback on August 5 when Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi, who was nowhere in the initial list of the AJK premier hopefuls, was picked by Prime Minister Imran Khan for the coveted office.

https://www.dailyausaaf.com/epaper/popup.php?news_src=issues/2021-08-18/142184/p1_03.gif

Ashura observed with solemnity, reverence across AJK

Daily Jammu Kashmir Times, 21 August 2021

Ashura, the 10th of Muharram ul Haram was observed all over Azad

Jammu and Kashmir as elsewhere in the country today with due solemnity and reverence to commemorate the supreme sacrifices rendered by Imam Hussain (A.S), his family and companions at Karbala to the cause of Islam and upholding the truthfulness. On this occasion various *Taazia*, *Alam* and *Zuljinnah* processions were taken out from different *Imambargahs* at all the district headquarters of the State.

In Muzaffarabad, the state capital main procession was taken out from Central *Imambargah*, Shah Bukhari. It passed through its traditional routes and ended at the same place. Meanwhile, clerics and religious scholars highlighted the philosophy of martyrdom while standing against tyranny.

Participants of the procession through resolutions strongly condemned massive human rights abuses in Indian Occupied Kashmir and Palestine. Through another resolution they condemned the ban on Ashura procession in Indian Occupied Kashmir and demanded to United Nation and international community to play their role in granting Kashmiris their internationally recognized right of self-determination.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Resize-of-fp-jktimes21-08-021.jpg>

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Disclaimer

PoK weekly News Digest is a collection of news reports and press releases published in various newspapers and local media related to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), referred to as 'Azad Kashmir' and 'Gilgit Baltistan' by the government of Pakistan. The news reports have been edited and abridged to provide clarity. MP-IDSA is not responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the news items.



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