

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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investment
innovation POK Gilgit-Baltistan tourism
power projects energy
development IT Centres



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Political Developments

EU ‘must play a role to resolve Kashmir issue’: Former AJK president

Daily Parliament Times, 23 August 2021

The former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Sardar Masood Khan, has urged the members of the European Parliament to play their role in mitigating the dangers to peace and security of the region due to the unresolved Kashmir conflict. In a letter to 16 members of the European Parliament, he noted that the AJK government completely supports the appeal of the members of the European Parliament for negotiations among India, Pakistan and the representatives of the Kashmiri people to resolve the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.

While highlighting the prevailing scenario in Indian part of the Kashmir, the AJK president said that due to the protection under the draconian laws, the Indian occupation forces operate with impunity and the killings, blinding and arbitrary detentions are rampant. He claimed that the lives of human rights defenders and the right to freedom of expression, mobility, health and education have been curtailed. The former president further stated that at present the major threat which the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir are facing is the Indian government’s strategy to settle millions of Hindu citizens in occupied Kashmir.

“The most sinister existential threat which Kashmiris are facing is the illicit

transfer of millions of Hindus from India to the occupied territory designed to change its demographic composition. Land laws have been amended to expropriate the bulk of Kashmiri land.”

He also expressed his gratitude to the Members of European Parliament for writing a letter highlighting the oppression in the occupied Kashmir to the European Commission president and vice president on July 30. The AJK president said that European Union leadership have raised their voice at a time when majority of the world parliaments were silent over the appalling humanitarian crisis in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2021/08/23/191726/#.YSpBaJozbIW>

India should ‘learn’ from evolving situation in Afghanistan: Newly elected AJK President, Sultan Mahmood

Daily Pakistan, 25 August 2021

Newly elected President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry said that ‘India need to learn’ from the evolving situation in Afghanistan. He asserted that the freedom of any country cannot be curbed for a very long period, even British colonial power had to leave the Indian subcontinent.

After the oath taking ceremony, President Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry in his speech said that he has organized millions of rallies for Kashmir all over the world, and a number of committees pertaining to occupied Kashmir have

also been formed in the European Parliament. President Mehmood asserted that he will work for the “independence of Kashmir.” He further said that the newly elected government in Azad Kashmir should conduct early local body elections to decentralize power to the lower level and also ensure the right to vote to the overseas Kashmiris.

<https://dailypakistan.com.pk/25-Aug-2021/1332336>

AJK PM appeals for UN attention on ‘Indian atrocities’

The News, 27 August 2021

Newly elected Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister (PM) Abdul Qayyum Niazi has called the attention of the United Nations (UN) towards horrific human rights violations and extrajudicial killings of Kashmiri people at the hands of Indian forces in occupied Jammu and Kashmir (OJK). The PM of AJK while talking to the chairman of Kashmir committee Shahriar Khan Afridi said that apart from referendum in accordance to United Nations resolutions, there is no other solution to the Kashmir issue.

PM Niazi alleged that Indian forces are involved in organized killings of Kashmiri people and the act of regular killings have not only increased the reign of terror but it has also systematically crushed the ‘freedom movements’ led by Kashmiris for achieving their fundamental right to self-determination.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/883986-ajk-pm-draws-un-attention-to-indian-atrocities>

Economic Developments

Government of Gilgit-Baltistan and PPAF ink MoU to undertake joint development strategies

Pamir Times, 27 August 2021

Government of Gilgit-Baltistan’s (GB) Planning and Development Department (P&DD), and Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Gilgit Baltistan Secretariat, Islamabad, to reduce poverty and enhance socio economic development in far flung areas of GB under collaborated development initiatives. The GB department of P&DD and Pakistan PPAF will undertake joint development strategies in various areas including innovation and entrepreneurship, infrastructure and energy, education, tourism, social welfare, and agriculture.

Additional Chief Secretary, government of GB, Syed Abrar Hussain, and Chief Executive officer of PPAF, Qazi Azmat Isa, signed the MoU on behalf of the Government of GB and PPAF in the presence of Chief Minister of GB Khalid Khursheed.

Chief Minister of GB termed the signing of MoU between GB government and PPAF a landmark to initiate various important development activities in the region. He said that “I am sure that this collaboration will help in ushering new era of development under the collaborated initiatives, especially in the less developed areas of Gilgit-Baltistan.” Mr Qazi Azmat Isa, CEO, PPAF, on the occasion said, “PPAF believes in the inclusive &

integrated effort in reducing poverty in far flung districts and I am confident that joining hands with Gilgit-Baltistan government would enhance and strengthen the scope and impact of our work in underserved districts of Gilgit-Baltistan.”

PPAF, under the MoU, will facilitate the government of GB to engage with its partner organizations and local communities to initiate the activities of economic and social development whereas the government of GB will share its financial support to jointly initiated projects.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2021/08/27/govt-of-gilgit-baltistan-and-ppaf-ink-mou-to-undertake-joint-development-strategies/>

PM Imran Khan approves one billion package grant for IT development program in Gilgit-Baltistan

Daily Ausaf, 27 August 2021

The Federal Government has approved 1 billion rupees under the Prime Minister's (PM) Imran Khan economic development program to establish 10 Information Technology (IT) centres in Gilgit-Baltistan. In the initial phase, three IT centres will be established in Gilgit division, Baltistan division and Diamer division with the cost of 400 million.

In the next phase, the remaining IT centres will be established at the cost of 60 million at the district level. Gilgit-Baltistan department of education has been directed to identify and allocate the places for the establishment of IT centre and submit final report to finance division. The Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan Imran Khan has taken this decision on the recommendation of

Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Khalid Khurshid during his recent visit to Islamabad. PM emphasized that the establishment of 10 IT centres in each district of Gilgit-Baltistan will create employment opportunities and self-sufficiency for the youths.

https://www.dailyausaf.com/epaper/popup.php?newsrsrc=issues/2021-08-28/142830/p1_14.gif

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Decision to include Gilgit-Baltistan in Dubai Expo

DailyK2, 24 August, 2021

Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan stressed that in the forthcoming Dubai expo which is to be held from October 1, 2021, his government will focus on highlighting the abundant investment opportunities in Pakistan, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). It has been announced that with the participation of PM Imran Khan in the expo, important provincial projects will be feature in the event and all provincial governments have been directed to finalize the preparations of projects that are in focus.

In this regard, a review meeting was held in which Information Minister, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain, foreign trade adviser, Abdul Razzaq, secretaries of concerned ministries, chief executive of trade and development authority officials participated. The meeting was held to prepare various aspects of trade and investment opportunities in the provinces which will be introduced to the international community in the expo. The PM was given a detailed

briefing on the economic opportunities in Pakistan. The PM emphasized that during the Expo, special attention should be paid to highlight the rich investment opportunities available in Pakistan and its provinces: projects like Ravi River project, Central Business District as well as tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Northern Areas. Special attention should be paid to the promotion of the country's mineral resources, IT and religious tourism and to attract international investment in these sectors.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/3173>

Invitation to Kingdom of Morocco's to invest in Gilgit-Baltistan

DailyK2, 24 August 2021

The kingdom of Morocco's ambassador to Pakistan Muhammad Karmon met with the president of Pakistan's Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) Mian Nasir Hayat in Islamabad. During the meeting, it was agreed to further strengthen relations between the two countries and promote trade and investment. The chairman of FPCCI Kurban Ali while speaking in the meeting said that Pakistan is a country rich in natural resources. There are vast investment opportunities in sectors including tourism, hydro and solar power projects and mines and minerals.

Kurban Ali invited the Moroccan Ambassador to visit Gilgit-Baltistan and emphasized that there are immense opportunities not only for investment and trade in Gilgit-Baltistan but also in areas like tourism and exploration of minerals. The FPCCI and

the Government of Pakistan will extend all possible assistance to investors. He said that direct flights and strong air links should be established between Pakistan and Morocco so as to facilitate the trade relations between the two countries and people could have better access to transportation. Speaking during the meeting, Morocco's Ambassador to Pakistan Muhammad Karmon said that although bilateral relations between Pakistan and Morocco started in 1958, trade relations between the two countries are very small and we need to create and explore joint projects in new areas.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/3167>

India must take a positive stance on Occupied Kashmir: Taliban

Daily Jasarat, 26 August 2021

Afghan Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid has said that India needs to change its approach towards occupied Kashmir. The Taliban spokesman in his interview referred to Pakistan as their second home and asserted that Afghan Taliban will not allow its territory to be used against Islamabad. He further said that the propaganda against Pakistan has been going on since the era of Soviet occupations. The recent victory of Taliban came with the help of Almighty and their own power, no one including Pakistan helped and therefore India need to desist from adverse propaganda. He said that Pakistan and India should solve their problems and when the world recognizes us, we will also support the negotiations.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2021/08/26/210826-01-5/>

India cannot suppress Kashmiris by force: AJK President

Nawaiwaqt, 26 August 2021

Barrister Sultan Mahmood, the newly elected President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), has said that two years ago, in the month of August, India invaded Kashmir illegally and immorally, repealing articles 370 and 35-A of its constitution and depriving the Kashmiris of their basic human rights. The military siege of occupied Kashmir turned the entire state into a prison and this siege continues even today. We assure the people of occupied Kashmir that now the whole world has understood that India wants to suppress 10 million Kashmiris through coercion. But history has shown that freedom movements have never been suppressed. The defeat of the two superpowers in Afghanistan is proof that no nation can be enslaved for long by force and against the will of the people.

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2021-08-26/page-1/detail-13>

Imran Khan is the ambassador and ray of hope for Kashmiri's: AJK PM

Daily Jammu and Kashmir Times, 27 August 2021

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister (PM) Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan has said that PM Imran Khan is the ambassador of Kashmiris' independence movement and a ray of hope for their future. PM Niazi asserted that under the leadership of the PM of

Pakistan, AJK's prosperity will usher in a new era of development. Imran Khan deserves utmost appreciation for highlighting the Kashmir independence movement in international forums in the best possible way. Kashmiris do not recognize any move by India. And the whole nation is united against the oppressive and aggressive behaviour of India. The unarmed people of occupied Kashmir are not alone. Imran Khan is a ray of hope and a powerful voice of the oppressed Kashmiris.

He further stressed that the more recent events particularly after the abrogation of statehood of the occupied Kashmir demonstrated the oppression by the Indian occupying forces. Since August 5 occupied Kashmir has become a human prison which has no connection with the outside world. The Indian Army has been wreaking havoc in several areas of occupied Kashmir and youths are being martyred during search and siege operations. He said that the international community should take notice of these genocidal measures and now that it is aware of the real situation in Kashmir, it should take practical steps beyond the verbal support of the oppressed Kashmiris. The Kashmir issue should be resolved according to the wishes of the Kashmiris and the Kashmiri people should be given the right to decide the future according to their own free will.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Resize-of-fp-jktimes-27-8-021.jpg>

Despite Indian oppression Kashmiris are in high spirits: International community should take note of the atrocities

Daily Ausaf, 29 August 2021

Former Prime Minister (PM) of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Atiqur Rehman has said that despite India's brutal occupation and its inhumane atrocities in Kashmir, Kashmiris are in high spirits. He urged to International human rights organizations to take notice of the Indian army atrocities on the unarmed civilians in occupied Kashmir. He expressed these views while talking to various government officials and civil society members during a visit to Muzaffarabad. He further said that the first PM of India had taken the Kashmir issue to the United Nations (UN) and now India is constantly renegeing on its own promises. Indian Army's persistent human rights violations and political and economic exploitation of the Kashmiris constitute major humanitarian crime which can be brought into the notice of international community to put pressure on India.

Sardar Atiq-ur-Rehman said that Kashmiris have linked their future with Pakistan and its foundation is strong and stable. He said that Pakistan is the only option for Kashmiris as time and again they have made eternal sacrifices to attain this objective. This is unprecedented in the history of the world. He said that in the wake of unprecedented struggle of the Kashmir independence movement, we salute mothers who lost their sons in the struggle, sisters who sacrificed their brothers. Their holy blood which they

are shedding for the freedom movement will never be in vain. In recent times, the biggest lockdown in human history has been imposed by India in occupied Kashmir.

https://www.dailyausaf.com/epaper/popup.php?news_src=issues/2021-08-26/142658/p1_38.gif

We will make AJK the base of the independence movement: AJK PM to the delegation of Hurriyat Conference

Daily Ausaf, 30 August 2021

The Prime Minister (PM) of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi has said that, we will make AJK the centre of the Kashmir independence movement. He said that Indian government atrocities on civilians in occupied Kashmir are detrimental to peace in South Asia. The solution to the Kashmir issue rest in the United Nations (UN) resolutions. Let the international community play its vital role in solving this prolonged conflict and if the UN does not play its role in addressing the Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir, its importance in the world will be lost.

He expressed these views in a meeting with the delegation of Hurriyat conference at Jammu and Kashmir house Islamabad. The Hurriyat conference delegation was led by its convener Syed Faiz among others. The delegation of Hurriyat conference congratulated Abdul Qayyum on being elected as the PM of AJK and appreciated his work towards the Kashmir movement. The Prime Minister further said to the delegation that India has crossed the limits of its atrocities in occupied Kashmir. The PM Modi government not only breaks

down the mountains of oppression on the state leadership, even the mothers, sisters and daughters are not safe from the horror of Indian Army in the occupied Kashmir. The Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir said that he himself is coming from Line of Control (LoC) region and there is no house in that area that does not fall victim to the Indian barbarianism. Hurriyat delegation briefed PM on the miserable conditions of Kashmiri independence movement leaders and youths who are in Indian jails. In his talk, the PM appreciated the success of the recently concluded Kashmir Premier League (KPL) tournament. He said that India had foiled many propaganda campaigns to thwart the success of KPL but they were defeated.

https://www.dailyausaf.com/epaper/popup.php?news_src=issues/2021-08-30/142964/p1_03.gif

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Disclaimer

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