

# Weekly POK News Digest

*(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)*

Volume 2 | Issue 24

13 - 19 June 2022

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## Political Developments

### **JKSM condemns PM Modi's government for banning NGO-run schools in 'IIOJK'**

*The Express Tribune, June 15, 2022*

The Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) Chairman Altaf Ahmed Bhat 'strongly condemned' the crackdown on schools in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) calling it an 'educational terrorism.' Altaf said that the education department in 'IIOJK' in a bid to 'destroy the future' of Kashmiri students has ordered the banning of all Fallah-e-Aam Trust (FAT) schools while directing district and zonal education officers to seal all schools within 15 days, added that more than 20,000 students are studying in the hundreds of schools affiliated with FAT in 'IIOJK.'

Bhat said that the Prime Minister (PM) Modi-led Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) government is 'violating' every basic human right in 'IIOJK, while international organisations have turned their eyes blind to the 'Indian atrocities.' He further said that from 'destroying economy, businesses, torturing and killing youth', now Indian government officials have started 'educational terrorism' by closing schools for needy students across the 'occupied region.' He further said that last year the 'Indian occupation' administration stopped Kashmiri students who were pursuing professional degree programmes all over the world from continuing their education, now the 'IIOJK' administration is closing schools to

create hopelessness and destroy the 'future of Kashmiris.'

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2361542/jksm-slams-modi-govt-for-banning-ngo-run-schools-in-iiojk>

### **'AJK' president seeks EU's role in resolving Kashmir dispute**

*Daily Times, June 16, 2022*

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry while seeking the European Union's (EU) role to resolve the Kashmir dispute, has appealed to the EU to appoint a special envoy on Kashmir. He said this during his meeting with Maria Arena, the chairperson of the Human Rights Committee in the European parliament, Bernhard Zimniok, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee in the European Parliament, and Virginie Joron, a member of the European Parliament from France. During the meeting, the president urged the EU to appoint a special envoy to Kashmir so that it could review the situation in 'occupied Kashmir' and submit its report to the European Parliament. He added that the European Parliament should also organize an Intra-Kashmir Dialogue and play its role in initiating dialogue between India and Pakistan. He also sought the EU parliamentarians' role in establishing the Friends of Kashmir group in the European Parliament to galvanize support for the resolution of the Kashmir issue, stop the ongoing 'human rights violations' and play their due role in the early release of Yassin Malik in 'occupied Kashmir.'

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/952937/barrister-sultan-seeks-eus-role-in-resolving-kashmir-dispute/>

### **Kashmiris to continue peaceful freedom struggle till complete success: APHC-'AJK'**

*Daily Times, June 18, 2022*

The newly-elected convener of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (APHC-AJK) chapter, Mahmood Ahmed Saghar has said that Kashmiris will continue their peaceful struggle for securing their right to self-determination till it reached its logical conclusion. Saghar said that the Kashmiris have been rendering 'unprecedented sacrifices' for their inalienable right to self-determination since 1947 and their 'freedom movement' is one of the longest-running freedom movements in the world. He said that if the issues of East Timor and South Sudan could be resolved through referendum then why not Kashmir, therefore, the international community should give up its double standard and come forward to help the Kashmiris in securing their inalienable right. The APHC-'AJK' convener said that at present all the top Hurriyat leaders, including Masarrat Alam Butt, Shabbir Ahmed Shah, Yasin Malik, and Aasiya Andrabi were lodged in jails while several youths had also been sent behind the bars by the PM Narendra Modi-led 'fascist Indian government.' While replying to a question, he said that the APHC wanted all the people living in Jammu and Kashmir, including Muslims as well as Pandits, Sikhs and Buddhists must be allowed to exercise their right to self-determination. He added that Pakistan, 'AJK' and the Hurriyat leadership should formulate a joint strategy to

raise the Kashmir dispute more effectively at the international level. He said that we do not need any other road map for resolving the Kashmir dispute because the United Nations has already given a road map for it. He said that Kashmiris have 'never recognized' the Indian constitution, so the steps taken by the Indian rulers in the 'occupied territory' have no constitutional and legal status and our only demand is that India 'withdraws from Kashmir.'

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/953730/kashmiris-to-continue-peaceful-freedom-struggle-till-complete-success-aphc/>

### **No change in Pakistan's policy towards India: FO**

*The Nation, June 18, 2022*

Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Asim Iftikhar Ahmed said that there is no change in Pakistan's policy on India on which there is a national consensus. Pakistan FO has said that Pakistan has consistently advocated constructive engagement and result-oriented dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues, including the core issue of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. He said remarks made by foreign minister Bilawal regarding relations with India in his address at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad were being interpreted out of context and portrayed incorrectly. He said it was India's 'unabated hostility and retrogressive steps' that have vitiated the environment and 'impeded the prospects' of peace and cooperation. The spokesperson said that the Pakistan foreign minister clearly articulated this perspective, referring to

India's 'illegal and unilateral actions' in the 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) since 5 August 2019, describing them as an assault on the rights of the Kashmiri people, as well as rising Islamophobia in India, that created an environment un conducive for meaningful engagement. The FO said that Pakistan and India have a long history of war and conflict, and the events of August 2019 cannot be taken lightly.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/18/no-change-in-pakistans-policy-towards-india-fo/>

### **Economic Developments**

#### **PM directs early resolution of financial issues of GB, 'AJK'**

*The Nation, June 16, 2022*

The federal government has decided to resolve the financial woes of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) on a priority basis in the wake of reports of strong reaction from the leadership of both regions about financial cuts made in their budgets by the federal government. The adviser to PM on GB and 'AJK', Qamar Zaman Kaira and minister for planning Ahsan Iqbal held a meeting with PM Shehbaz Sharif and briefed him about the various administrative, financial and development issues related to GB and AJK. During the meeting, PM directed both the planning minister and adviser to meet the concerned officials of the finance and planning commission, and resolve the issues being faced by both regions, which he said are strategically important for Pakistan.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/16/pm-directs-early-resolution-of-financial-issues-of-gb-ajk/>

#### **'AJK' PM asks revenue authorities to make the tax system business-friendly**

*Daily Times, June 16, 2022*

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Tanveer Ilyas Khan has stressed the need for removing existing complexities in the region's tax system to make it easier and business-friendly. The 'AJK' PM made these remarks while addressing a meeting of the Central Board of Revenue (CBR) and noted that restoring the Inland Revenue Department to its original condition was the government's priority. While referring to complexities in the 'AJK' region's tax system, he said that there was a dire need to remove all the complexities and cumbersome procedures in the existing system so that businessmen and investors could have no problems. The PM stated that the CBR should encourage local industrialists, to encourage taxpayers by making the tax collection system people-friendly and transparent.

The PM directed the officials of the Inland Revenue Department to compile a list of the top 100 prominent taxpayers of 'Azad Kashmir' and to encourage them, adding that all possible measures would be taken to make the CBR a better institution and whatever legal loopholes exist in the CBR Act would also be removed. He said that tourist destinations of 'Azad Kashmir' are in no way inferior to tourist destinations of the world but the problem is that during the past several decades no effort was made for the development of tourism, adding that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)

government would give tourism the status of industry to boost the local economy and generate more revenue for the state. He said that the funds would be allocated in the forthcoming budget for the promotion of local industry. While highlighting the CBR's performance, the officials informed the PM that after the 13th amendment, the CBR had earned more revenue than its target in tax collection, and added that in the year 2020-21, the CBR had collected taxes worth 29 billion rupees against the revenue target of 28 billion rupees. The target for tax collection in the current financial year is 31 billion rupees, which will be completed by the end of the year.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/953711/ajk-pm-asks-revenue-authorities-to-make-tax-system-business-friendly/>

### **The budget will not be people-friendly due to the federal government cuts: 'AJK' ministers**

*Dailyk2, June 18, 2022*

The Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) ministers, including the speaker Amjad Zaidi, information minister Fatehullah Khan, and finance minister Javed Manwa among others while addressing a joint press conference on the federal government's budget cuts noted that GB is a very sensitive region and the federal government should immediately withdraw the decisions taken against GB, otherwise, the voice will be raised in the GB assembly against this oppression. The ministers said that there is no governor in GB yet and the budget meeting is being rearranged. The interest of GB is the top priority of the PTI government and all

members of the provincial government are on the same page against the development and oppression of the GB region, added that, unlike the last year, it will be difficult to present a people-friendly budget this year due to the budget cuts by the federal government. The ministers demanded that wheat subsidy should be given and the special status of GB must be continued. He says any economic exploitation of GB will not be tolerated under any circumstances. The ministers said that GB is a unique province and that it has no share in the National Finance Commission Award (NFCA), adding that this province is run on a grant. A budget of 68 billion was proposed by the GB government on March 28, 2022, but only 47 billion has been budgeted, adding that the federation has killed the economy. The ministers said that wherever there is the economic exploitation of the people, we will not remain silent and maintained that the federation should not give us a budget considering it as charity.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/6845>

### **Stakeholders agree on a roadmap for WEFE nexus in GB, Pakistan**

*Pamir Times, June 18, 2022*

The Soni Jawari Center for Public Policy-government of Gilgit-Baltistan (SJCPP-GOP) in collaboration with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Karakoram International University (KIU), and World Wide Fund (WWF) Pakistan organized a one-day workshop on Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem (WEFE) in Gilgit, Pakistan. The ICIMOD and its partners have

conducted a comprehensive study on the WEFE nexus scoping in the upper Indus Basin. The purpose of this workshop was to share and discuss key findings of the study and WEFE nexus framework as an emerging integrated policy-making and Programme development approach for sustainable natural resource management, and develop a road map for piloting the WEFE nexus in GB. The head of SJCPP, Izhar Ali termed the WEFE Nexus as a new and emerging concept yet highly relevant to mountain regions and natural resource-based economics like GB added that in GB, traditionally, we are used to a silo sector approach to managing natural resources. However, we strongly need efficient and effective integrated approaches to better manage our resources.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2022/06/18/stakeholders-agree-on-roadmap-for-wefe-nexus-in-gb-pakistan/>

### **Poverty alleviation: Rapid influx of silk farmers to earn income through silkworm rearing in 'AJK' reaches climax**

*Daily Parliament Times, June 18, 2022*

The director of the sericulture department of 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' (AJK) government Syed Ali Asghar Shah said that an attractive additional amount of income can be earned through silkworm rearing by the existing and intending sericulture farmers in the private sector in 'AJK' where a conducive environment already prevails to flourish this fast-emerging cottage industry. The silk farmers belonging to Chinnari town of Jhelum Valley district and Nalouchi area of Muzaffarabad district sold out

their 2.72 lakh worth of self-produced silk cocoon to the buyers belonging to Changa Manga area of Lahore under the supervision of officials of the sericulture department of 'AJK' government. The director of 'AJK' sericulture said that the silk farmers trained by the sericulture department last year were also provided mulberry plants, urea and rearing kits with imported silk seed for their motivation towards silkworm rearing for their livelihood, poverty alleviation and economic uplift. He further said that due to the incentives and facilities provided by the 'AJK' sericulture department, some farmers from Chinnari district, Jhelum Valley and Nalouchi district Muzaffarabad collectively sold out almost 80 Kg of their produced / dry silk cocoon for 3400/- per Kg.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/06/18/poverty-alleviation-rapid-influx-of-silk-farmers-to-earn-income-through-silkworm-rearing-in-ajk-reaches-at-climax/>

### **From Vernacular Urdu Media**

#### **'Azad Kashmir' cabinet decides not to present the budget in protest against federal government budget cuts**

*Daily Pakistan, June 13, 2022*

A cabinet meeting held under the chairmanship of PM Tanveer Ilyas has decided not to present the budget for the fiscal year 2022-23 if the central government does not reverse its decision on budget cuts. The 'AJK' PM said that a cabinet committee was formed to take on board all the stakeholders within and outside the assembly and added that media

committees were also formed to raise the issue effectively. Tanveer Ilyas Khan noted that the central government was imposing cuts on the budgets of 'Azad Kashmir' and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) because both the region were governed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). He stressed that 'Azad Kashmir' is the base camp of Kashmir's liberation struggle and because of its great importance especially in terms of security and defence, the region cannot afford budgetary cuts. He maintained that the central government would be informed about the region's sensitive nature and the situation arising out of budget cuts.

The acting president of PTI 'AJK', Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq said that budget cuts would harm the region and noted that Kashmiris have already made sacrifices for Pakistan and if Pakistan is still in need of our sacrifices then the federal government should stop the entire budget cuts. During the meeting, it was also decided that a committee headed by Mir Akbar has been assigned the task to hold dialogue with opposition parties on the matter.

<https://dailypakistan.com.pk/13-Jun-2022/1450333>

### **'AJK' president seeks British PM's role in the resolution of Kashmir dispute**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, June 18, 2022*

The president of 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry presented a memorandum to the British Prime Minister (PM) Boris Johnson urging him to use his political and diplomatic clout to resolve the

prolonged dispute in line with Kashmiris' wishes and aspirations. While seeking an early settlement of the long-pending dispute, the 'AJK' president urged the British PM to influence India to grant Kashmiris what they have been promised, the right to self-determination, put an immediate end to the 'human rights' violations and help secure an early release of Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik, who was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. The 'AJK' president was accompanied by Lord Qurban Hussain and members of the British parliament including Mirza Khalid Mahmood, Azad Imran Hussain, Raja Yaseen, Jess Phillips and Paul Bristow. While talking to the media, Chaudhry said that given the United Kingdom's (UK) role in world politics, the British government has the responsibility for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute. It was incumbent upon the UK to force New Delhi in stopping bloodshed and violence in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK).

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Resize-of-F-18.jpg>

### **Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman to address Kashmir Conference**

*Jasarat, June 18, 2022*

The head of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), Maulana Fazlur Rehman will address the Wahdat (Unity) Kashmir Conference on June 30 at Sabir Shaheed Stadium, Rawalpindi. Wahdat Kashmir Zindabad Conference will be hosted by Allama Saeed Yousuf, head of JUI-Kashmir. Due to Fazlur Rehman's

‘decisive response’ against making Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) a transitional province, his visit to Rawalpindi is ‘eagerly awaited’ and preparation has already been made. The federal minister for Kashmir affairs, Qamar-ul-Zaman Kaira will also address the conference.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2022/06/18/maulana-fazlur-rehman-to-address-kashmir-conference/>

### **We will make all efforts to secure Yasin’s release**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, June 19, 2022*

The president of ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has asked the recently formed Defence Committee (AJK president has set up a defence committee of lawyers that will take legal action to secure the release of Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik) to ‘redouble its efforts’ to secure the early release of Yasin Malik who was convicted after a ‘sham trial’ by an Indian court recently. While addressing the members of the Defence Committee in London he said that all possible efforts should be made for the early release of Yasin Malik. He said that the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Chairman Yasin Malik was convicted after a ‘bogus trial’ and he was not even given ample opportunity to present his case in the court of law nor was he given the right to ‘fair trial.’ While referring to various shortcomings in the National Investigation Agency (NIA) court’s verdict on Yasin Malik, the president urged the team of barristers in the committee to study the case in detail

and expose injustices meted out to Malik and human rights protocols being violated by the NIA court. The members of the Defence Committee assured the president that the committee has started its work by obtaining all the necessary documents in this regard, and added that the committee would also consult senior legal experts in the UK to seek their legal advice on the matter.

The ‘AJK’ president said that the main purpose of his visit was to awaken the world conscience regarding the fast deteriorating political and human rights situation in Kashmir and stressed that he has presented the Kashmiris’ case in every forum, adding it was now the sole responsibility of Kashmiris living abroad, especially in the UK, to pursue and raise the Kashmir issue at every forum. While referring to the ‘worsening situation’ in the ‘Indian held territory,’ he said that situation in the ‘Indian occupied Kashmir’ has been further exacerbated ever since India changed the special status of ‘occupied Kashmir’ on August 5, 2019. While addressing the gathering, Sikh leader, Gul Charan Singh said that we are with the Kashmiri people in their struggle and praised the ‘AJK’ president for his selfless services to the Kashmir cause. The ‘AJK’ president during his visit also formed the core committee of Kashmir Peace Forum International which includes Chaudhry Majid Ismail, Barrister Hafeez, Councilor Ansar from Birmingham, and Councilor Maroof from Rathdrum.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/1-2.jpg>

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Volume 2 | Issue 24

13 - 19 June 2022

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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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