

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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planning Gilgit-
POK Baltistan
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energy



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Political Developments

Pakistan urges world to hold India accountable for ‘crimes’ in ‘IIOJK’

The Express Tribune, June 20, 2022

Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Asim Iftikhar urged the international community to take cognizance of the ‘sexual crimes’ against the people of ‘Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir’ (IIOJK) and hold them to account for their actions. In his message on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, FO said that ‘rape is employed as a tool of suppression and means of collective punishment in IIOJK.’ He said that the women, girls and children of ‘IIOJK’ have witnessed the most egregious forms of ‘sexual violence’ in recent times, adding that since August 5, 2019, when India changed ‘IIOJK’ status ‘illegally’, ‘violence’ against all genders, including children, had drastically increased. The spokesperson further claimed that the ‘Indian state’ machinery had perpetrated ‘sexual violence’ with full impunity to silence the people of ‘IIOJK’ and stop them from demanding their legitimate right to self-determination, pledged by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.

The FO spokesperson while referring to the ‘mass rape of the Kashmiri women’ in Kunan Poshpura villages of ‘IIOJK’ on February 23, 1991, noted that it continued to haunt the victims, who still await justice. He said that all international calls for prosecution of perpetrators had been rejected by India

and there remained a pervasive culture of impunity through connivance between the ‘Indian state machinery, judiciary and the media.’ He said that India must be urged to respect its international obligations, especially those related to the relevant UNSC resolutions, the 4th Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocol 1. He stressed that it is incumbent upon the international community to rise above geopolitical and economic interests and show its commitment to the UN Charter and international law in protecting the victims and in holding the perpetrators of ‘sexual violence’ accountable.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2362438/pakistan-urges-world-to-hold-india-accountable-for-crimes-in-iiojk>

British shadow foreign minister Catherine West calls on ‘AJK’ President

Daily Parliament Times, June 20, 2022

British shadow foreign minister Catherine West called on the president of ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (AJK), Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry in London. During the meeting, Catherine West told the ‘AJK’ president that the ongoing ‘Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir’ and the issue of Yasin Malik would be raised in this week’s session of the British parliament. Meanwhile, the ‘AJK’ president in a meeting with the speaker and members of the British parliament gave a detailed briefing on the Kashmir issue, ongoing ‘human rights violations by India’ in the ‘occupied Kashmir’ and the case of Yasin Malik. Rehman Chishti, a member of the British ruling

party introduced the 'AJK' president to members of the British parliament and speaker house of commons, Lindsey Hoyle.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/06/20/british-shadow-foreign-minister-catherine-west-calls-on-ajk-president/>

Mushaal urges the legal fraternity to speed up efforts to ensure the safe release of Yasin Malik

The Nation, June 22, 2022

Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of jailed Hurriyat Leader Yasin Malik urged the world to 'shun duplicity' and 'impose sanctions' on PM Narendra Modi-led India for 'trampling laws' and unleashing a wave of 'terrorism and barbarism' in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK). While speaking at a seminar organized by Islamabad High Court Bar Association to 'condemn India' and discuss the 'disputed judgment' against Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chairman, Yasin Malik, she thanked the Bar for holding the event to raise her voice against 'unjust and inhuman treatment' meted out to the Kashmiri leader. She said that the world should build pressure on India to 'impose severe sanctions' or else it would be next to impossible to stop the 'reign of terror' in the 'occupied valley.'

She further said that it was the right time to highlight the issue of Yasin Malik's 'illegal detention' at every forum because Malik was kept in a 'death cell' in isolation and Indian police were known for 'torturing to death', as dozen of senior Hurriyat leaders and young 'freedom fighters' had already been 'tortured to death' in

jails. She lauded the Bar for its efforts and appealed to them to accelerate their efforts and help her to fight his case at the International Court of Justice, United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) forums. Mushaal stated that Yasin Malik believed in the peaceful struggle, however, they implicated him in 'false, fabricated, and concocted cases' to keep him silent. She added that he was neither provided with the much-needed medicines despite his fast deteriorating health condition nor his counsel was allowed to meet him.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/22/mushaal-urges-legal-fraternity-to-speed-up-efforts-to-ensure-safe-release-of-yasin/>

New electoral maps, a 'ploy to disempower' the Muslim majority

Pakistan Observer, June 23, 2022

During a webinar, hosted by Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) in collaboration with the World Muslim Conference titled 'Delimitation of Assembly segments in IIOJK: another ploy to disempower Muslim majority', speakers have said that the delimitation of assembly segments in 'Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) is aimed at 'disenfranchising and disempowering' the Muslim majority population. The webinar was attended and addressed by advocates, Quaid-e-Azam University faculty members, All Party Hurriyat Conference, 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (APHC-AJK) leaders and others. In his initial remarks, Altaf Hussain Wani, who moderated the seminar said that redrawing electoral

maps to reduce the political centrality of the Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir's politics has since long been a dream project of the 'far-right wing parties', including the BJP. The redrawing of electoral maps, he said, is part of India's systematic 'settler colonialism' campaign to 'subjugate the Muslim majority', minimize its role in the decision-making process and provide political mileage to the BJP to enable it to form government in the region so that it could legalize and legitimize the 5th August 2019 controversial decision and the subsequent actions it had taken so far on Kashmir. While taking 'strong exception' to the Delimitation Commission's 'biased approach', the speakers said the process of 'disempowering' and 'marginalizing the Muslim majority' that has begun soon after the abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A has now gained momentum in the region.

<https://pakobserver.net/new-electoral-maps-plot-to-disempower-muslim-majority/>

APHC-'AJK' highlights Kashmiri women's sacrifices in the freedom movement

Pakistan Observer, June 24, 2022

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (APHC-AJK) chapter organized a seminar titled 'widows and half widows of Kashmir' in Islamabad. The seminar, chaired by APHC- 'AJK' convener Mehmood Ahmed Saghar, was aimed at 'commemorating sacrifices' of the Kashmiri women in the ongoing 'freedom movement.' During the event, speakers said that 'Kashmiri women'

live under the 'shadow of war' and have a bitter experience of being a widow more than anybody else in the world. The speakers highlighted the widows' plight in the Kashmir conflict and noted that Kashmiri women are the worst victims of 'Indian state terrorism' in the 'occupied territory.' They said that thousands of women have lost their husbands, brothers and sons as they were martyred or subjected to 'custodial disappearance' by 'Indian troops.' The speakers maintained that the world must not forget the suffering and trauma of the Kashmiri widows and half-widows.

<https://pakobserver.net/aphc-ajk-highlights-kashmiri-womens-sacrifices-in-freedom-movement/>

Economic Developments

'AJK' PM for modernization of the housing sector

Daily Times, June 21, 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that the housing sector in 'Azad Kashmir' would be modernized so that the challenges of a growing population and inadequate housing could be addressed effectively. While talking to a delegation led by former chairman of Housing Task Force Punjab, Atif Ayub, at Jammu Kashmir House, Islamabad, he said that steps would be taken to uplift cities and towns, and instructions had been issued to the concerned departments regarding town planning. He said that practical steps are being taken to ensure uniform development all across the 'liberated territory', adding that the process of fulfilling the promises made to the people in general

elections had begun. While reiterating his government's commitment to bring real change in 'Azad Kashmir', he said that we will make 'AJK' a real paradise for tourists without affecting its natural beauty and landscape. He said that besides tourism, the region also holds great potential for the cottage industry.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/955254/ajk-pm-for-modernization-of-housing-sector/>

Kashmir and GB budgetary allocations revised: Qamar Zaman Kaira

Daily Times, June 22, 2022

The adviser to the Prime Minister (PM) Shahbaz Sharif on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Qamar Zaman Kaira said that the budgetary allocations for Kashmir and GB have been revised as per the directives of PM Shahbaz Sharif. He said that the planning and finance divisions have revised the budgetary allocations for Kashmir and GB and made enhancements to meet their demands and completion of the developmental projects. He further said that a meeting was held with the stakeholders from Kashmir and GB in this regard, and added that the impression was being created that the federal government has made a cut in the budget of GB and Kashmir where Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) is in power which he conveyed to the PM Shahbaz Sharif after which he took notice of it. Kaira further said that the present government realizes that Kashmir and GB are lagging in development and have a lack of resources and would continue taking all possible steps to improve the living standards of the

people of Kashmir and GB. He further maintained that we will continue to give preference to the progress and development of Kashmir and GB not only at par with the rest of the country but even more than that. The broad-based and consensus-based government took difficult decisions of increasing petrol and electricity prices owing to the ineffective policies of the previous government but also imposing taxes on the rich class, transferring ultimate relief to the masses. Kaira also 'condemned' the killing of ten to twelve innocent civilians in 'Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) during the last three days. He said that a new 'wave of violence' is being imposed on the people of Kashmir again however all such 'tactics' of India cannot defeat the courage of Kashmiri brothers and sisters and God willing they will achieve their goal of independence.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/955817/kashmir-and-gilgit-baltistan-budgetary-allocations-revised-kaira/>

Efforts are underway to formulate policies for 'climate-smart water, agriculture resource management' in GB

Daily Times, June 22, 2022

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Pakistan in collaboration with the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and Pakistan Council of Research on Water Resources (PCRWR) organized an event to formulate policies for climate-smart water and agriculture resource management in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). During the event, different knowledge

products were launched, including fact sheets and issue briefs, considering learning of the pilot interventions related to lifting water technologies and community-based flood early warning systems. These knowledge products could help relevant stakeholders for scaling of best practices through policies and programs. The key stakeholders include relevant government and non-government concerns and community members trained on using solar and hydro ram pumps for lifting river water to irrigate barren lands in GB. The representatives from the Federal Water Management Cell, Ministry of National Food Security and Research and PCRWR affirmed their commitment to helping build the resilience of the mountain communities, particularly to the effects of climate change.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/955816/efforts-underway-to-formulate-policies-for-climate-smart-water-agriculture-resource-management-in-gbl>

CPEC Karot Power plant put to the pre-commissioning test

The Nation, June 23, 2022

The 720 Megawatts (MW) Karot hydropower plant is now a week away from starting commercial operations after it was put to 168 hours long reliability run test (RTT). A senior official related to the Karot hydropower project noted that RTT is the last test before the commissioning of the project, and added that Karot Power is a special-purpose vehicle incorporated in Pakistan for executing the project by China Three Gorges (CTG) South Asia Investment Ltd, a

subsidiary of CTG. The test run was launched on June 21 and will conclude on June 28, after which all four units of the plant will be ready for full-scale electricity generation. Karot is the first-ever hydropower project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative to be completed at \$1.72 billion. The project will play a vital role in Pakistan's energy security by providing clean and affordable electricity. The run-of-river facility is already contributing electricity to the national grid free of cost. Prime Minister (PM) Shahbaz Sharif said during a recent visit to Karot that the plant will provide free electricity worth 4 billion to the national grid as a gift to the Pakistani people until it starts commercial operations.

According to the Central Power Purchasing Authority (CPPA), the project contributed 244.25 million units of free electricity to the national grid in May. The project official noted that the RTT is being witnessed by independent international engineers and officials of the relevant government departments, and added that before the RTT, the plant successfully went through the load rejection test at a full capacity of 720 MWs. This is a vital test in which load from a running unit is suddenly removed to check if it safely shuts down without damage to electromechanical installations and the civil foundations in case of tripping of the power plant. The reactive capability test was also successful. PM Shahbaz Sharif is expected to inaugurate this landmark clean and cheaper energy project of CPEC on June 30.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/23/cpec-karot-power-plant-put-to-pre-commissioning-test/>

Kashmiri migrants seek an increase in allowance

Dawn, June 23, 2022

The representatives of post-1989 migrants from 'India-held Kashmir' have called upon the Prime Minister (PM) and parliamentary leaders of Pakistan and 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) to substantially increase their monthly subsistence allowance to help them make their ends meet. The demands were made through different letters, and were publicly endorsed by Syed Salahuddin, the head of an alliance of 'indigenous Kashmiris outfits' struggling to 'overthrow Indian occupation.' According to the Dawn newspaper, 7,855 families comprising 43,037 persons are registered with the 'AJK' rehabilitation department as refugees from across the divide. While 3,101 families, comprising 17,340 persons, are living in 11 camps in Muzaffarabad and Jhelum valley districts, 1,159 families, comprising 6,766 persons, in five camps in Bagh district and 814 families, comprising 4,556 persons, in two camps in Kotli district. Apart from them, 2,781 families, comprising 14,375 persons, are living out of camps in different towns. The government provides a monthly subsistence allowance of 2,000 to each of them, additionally, a monthly stipend ranging from 100 to 300 is given to students from nursery to university level. However, according to Uzair Ahmed Ghazali, head of Pasban-e-Hurriyat and other representatives of refugees, they were finding it extremely difficult to make both ends

meet in this paltry allowance. He added that some three decades ago, they left homes and hearths in 'occupied Kashmir' due to 'savagery' of the Indian army and have been living ever since in makeshift camps in miserable conditions.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1696260/kashmiri-migrants-seek-increase-in-allowance>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Kashmir is Pakistan's defensive barricade; hopefully, budget issues will be resolved soon: 'AJK' PM

Daily Pakistan, June 21, 2021

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Kashmir', Tanveer Ilyas Khan said that Kashmir is a defensive barricade of Pakistan, and added that the people of 'occupied Jammu and Kashmir' are telling the eternal story of sacrifices for the completion of the idea of Pakistan. He said that the Kashmiri people salute Pakistani soldiers on the Line of Control (LoC), and they are proud of the brave forces of Pakistan. He further said that the forces of Pakistan have always kept the head of the country and the nation high by making sacrifices. He condemned the killing of 'Kashmiri youths' in 'occupied Jammu and Kashmir' during Indian 'state terrorism operations' and urged the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), human rights bodies and the civilized world to stop the brewing 'genocide of Kashmiris.' He said that Kashmiris across the border consider the Pakistan Army as their protector, and added that Kashmiris express their love for Pakistan by burying their

martyrs in the green crescent flag and raising the slogan 'Pakistan Zindabad' even under the shadow of 'Indian occupation forces.' He hoped that the issues regarding the budget of 'Azad Kashmir' would be resolved soon.

<https://dailypakistan.com.pk/21-Jun-2022/1453607>

Australia can play the role of mediator between Pakistan and India on Kashmir: 'AJK' President

Nawaiwaqt, June 22, 2021

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has said that Australia can play the role of mediator between Pakistan and India in Kashmir. The 'AJK' president expressed these views while talking to Australian High Commissioner Joanne Frederiksen and Victoria Banks, political secretary of the Australian High Commission who meet him at Kashmir House. While speaking on the occasion the president said that Australia enjoys good relations with both the countries (India and Pakistan) and being a champion of human rights, it can play a vital role in bringing both the neighbors to the negotiating table to bring about a peaceful settlement of the protracted dispute. He further said that Australia should arrange Intra-Kashmir Dialogue so that Kashmiris on both sides can come together and play the role of a bridge between Pakistan and India. While referring to his recent visit to the United Kingdom (UK) and Europe, he said that it was heartening to note that the international community was now gradually

realizing the importance of early resolution of the Kashmir issue.

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/AJK/2022-06-22/page-1>

'Azad Kashmir' government should take immediate steps to address the extremely precarious situation of Kashmiri refugees: APHC Convener

Urdupoint, June 22, 2022

Mahmood Ahmad Sagar, the convener of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), said that the condition of Kashmir refugees is extremely precarious due to rising inflation, and added that the 'Azad Kashmir' government should take immediate steps to address their plight. He said that eight thousand families of 'occupied Jammu and Kashmir' are residing in 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) since 1989 and are facing severe difficulties and problems. He said that the rising inflation in the country has affected these migrants and the education and health of the youths have been severely affected. Sagar said that it is an open and obvious fact that these refugees have made exemplary sacrifices for the ongoing struggle for independence, and added that if this dire situation was not resolved immediately, it would harm the 'Kashmir's independence movement.' He appealed to the government of the 'independent state' of Jammu and Kashmir to take immediate steps in this regard.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/national-news/live-news-3177814.html>

‘Citizens’ fear ‘fake operations’ after 40,000 additional Indian paramilitary personnel deployed in ‘Indian-occupied’ Jammu and Kashmir before Amarnath Yatra

Urdu-point, June 23, 2022

The deployment of 40,000 additional Indian paramilitary personnel ahead of the Amarnath Yatra in ‘Indian-occupied’ Jammu and Kashmir has raised serious concerns among Kashmiris and they fear that India may launch another ‘fake Pulwama-style’ operation. According to the Urdu-point newspaper, under the direction of Indian Home Minister Amit Shah, 40,000 additional security personnel have been deployed in the areas around Amarnath Yatra while the routes of the Yatra will also be monitored by drone cameras. The people of ‘occupied Jammu and Kashmir fear’ that India may use the Amarnath Yatra as a ‘pretext to target terrorism’ to further its nefarious agenda regarding ‘occupied Kashmir’ and blame Pakistan for a fake operation as India did during the Pathankot airbase attack and the 2019 Pulwama attack. The chances of a ‘fake Indian operation’ in the ‘Indian-occupied territory’ are high at the moment as controversial legislation and other measures by the Indian government have forced Muslims, Sikhs and farmers to take to the streets. In addition, due to the growing atrocities and extremist policies in ‘occupied Kashmir’, PM Narendra Modi’s ‘fascist Indian government’ is facing criticism from all over the world, so the BJP may

carry out fake operations to divert international attention.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/national-news/live-news-3179208.html>

Pasban-e-Hurriyat leader highlights Kashmiri women's plight on International Widows' Day

Mahasib June 24, 2022

The chairman of Pasban-e-Hurriyat, Uzair Ahmad Ghazali has said that around 23 thousand women have been widowed due to ‘Indian war crimes’ in ‘Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir’ (IIOJK). In a statement issued on International Widows’ Day, he condemned the silence of international organizations on the ‘worst atrocities’ committed against the widows whose men were ‘brutally martyred’ by the ‘Indian troops.’ While referring to the figures, he said that 22,944 Kashmiri women were widowed whose husbands were brutally martyred by the ‘Indian army’ during ‘fake encounters.’ He said that in the last 32 years, 10342 male civilians have been forcibly picked up from their homes by Indian troops and subsequently disappeared with no trace to date. He lamented that the world conscience does not feel the pain and agony of widows and semi-widows of ‘IIOJK’, and added that International Widows’ Day is a day of remembrance for the world to understand the plight of Kashmiri widows and semi-widows. Ghazali urged the United Nations (UN) and international human rights bodies to take notice of the ‘Indian war crimes’ and demanded immediate recovery of the missing Kashmiri citizens and stand with the sorrow and grief of semi-widows in ‘IIOJK.’

<https://mahasib.com.pk/epaper/muzaffarabad.php>

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Disclaimer

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