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POK
Pahalgam
khalsa sarkar
Land Reforms Act
development budget
Gilgit-Baltistan
tourism
Protest



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Political Developments

Land reforms in GB

Dawn, 18 June 2025

Gilgit-Baltistan's unclear political status remains the primary obstacle to its progress and development. Historically, the region has viewed itself as an integral part of Pakistan with its people independently liberating themselves from Dogra rule at the time of Partition. Despite having other choices, they unconditionally opted to join Pakistan, inviting government representatives to take control. This voluntary accession should have settled the region's status as part of Pakistan. However, following an agreement between the leaders in 'Azad Kashmir', GB was redefined as a disputed territory under Pakistan's administrative control. Pakistan chose to pursue a plebiscite in the 'disputed territory' of Kashmir and GB. Ironically, this fundamental shift emerged without any consultation with the local population or leadership, consequently placing GB in a state of political limbo. To this day, Pakistan continues to administer the region under revenue regulations introduced by the Dogras.

Successive governments have treated the sensitive issue of land ownership rights cavalierly, extending little effort towards improving the Dogra system which pivots on discriminatory laws and traditions trespassing upon the rights of the weak. Most of the common land was defined as khalsa sarkar,

virtually depriving the locals of any collective or individual claim on their own land. In 2017, when a small area of land was allotted to a development project, no compensation was extended to the affected people, leading to a dangerous law-and-order situation.

It was then that the government realised that ownership and usage of land could not be resolved through the existing system. Hence, the PML-N government formed a land reform commission, but no definite reforms emerged. However, the succeeding government, under the locals' pressure, asked the chief secretary Mohyuddin Wani to draft a comprehensive law ensuring transparent procedures for establishing equitable rights for locals to useable land. Mr Wani formed a team of competent officers posted in GB to work on various aspects of the existing legal framework for land management. Interacting with numerous stakeholders, the team also examined customary practices for determining the parameters of usage of common land. A draft law addressing all aspects of land management, with 41 sections of the bill comprehensively covering all key concerns of GB residents, was produced in record time.

However, influential people in illegal possession of land, and other groups with vested interests, politicised the issue, creating the misperception that the law was designed to take over their land. The PTI government, already known to have obstructed a constitutional reform bill granting

provisional provincial status to GB, failed to enact the Land Reforms Act. Meanwhile, a tourism surge created new investment opportunities in hotels and resorts. Investors often purchased land without realising that land titles in many areas were ambiguous, leading to widespread litigation and unrest. Land grabbers also sold communal land without proper documentation or legal title. While some parts of the GB region were settled and documented by the revenue department, others lacked official records. Land ownership in these areas was governed by complex customary practices, leaving vulnerable individuals open to exploitation.

Despite the challenges, the current government under Haji Gulbar Khan took decisive action. Following extensive consultations with stakeholders and with the active involvement of committed politicians led by GB PPP president advocate Amjad Hussain, a draft law was prepared. The draft was based on the template already developed by former chief secretary Mr Wani, which was designed to address core stakeholder concerns. Despite opposition from vested interests, including those backed by land grabbers, Mr Hussain stood firm and with some compromises enabled the local assembly to pass this important law.

As a practical framework to address long-standing land issues in GB, the new law replaces the archaic colonial legal structure imposed by

unrepresentative authorities lacking legitimate mandate. It comprehensively defines the individual rights of those in possession of or claiming land and introduces a process for categorising land as 'partible' (divisible) or 'impartible' (indivisible) to clearly resolve ownership rights for individuals, communities and the state. The law also provides a mechanism for identifying illegal possession of land by powerful individuals and their eviction.

While a significant step forward, the new law in Gilgit-Baltistan has some serious flaws that may lead unscrupulous elements to exploit it for compromising the rights of the vulnerable populations. Immediate attention is required to rectify these lacunae, lest the law ends up reinforcing existing inequalities.

A critical concern pertains to how the provincial and district apportionment/partition boards are composed. Responsible for land distribution, these bodies are dominated by government functionaries, with nominal public representation. This imbalance raises serious questions about transparency and objectivity. Furthermore, essential procedural provisions, such as quorum requirements, meeting protocols, and agenda distribution, are left to be determined by the provincial board. Again, such ambiguity creates opportunities for manipulation and lack of accountability, with an open-ended number of co-opted members to

be appointed by the chairmen of the provincial and districts boards. Crucially, there is no provision for the inclusion of neutral civil society members who could advocate for the concerns of ordinary citizens.

Adding to these flaws, some 50 per cent of the region has been excluded from the law's implementation for land apportionment and title transfer, pending 'settlement' of these areas, thus denying nearly half the population the benefits of this legislation. Such exclusion enables influential individuals in unsettled areas to protect their vested interests at the expense of the weak, thus questioning the very purpose of the legislation.

Nonetheless, despite its shortcomings, the law represents progress in addressing a core issue. It is now for committed assembly members, such as Amjad Hussain, to spearhead efforts in clarifying integral legislative ambiguities. Equally important is the GB government's resolve to ensure the law's swift and effective implementation to catalyse the region's investment climate, economic growth and much-needed employment opportunities for the youth. To truly deliver on this promise, the government must act decisively by initiating and completing implementation within the next six months, thus bringing succour to people who have waited far too long for justice and development.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1917804/land-reforms-in-gb>

GB fines hotel Rs1.5m for allegedly dumping sewage into Attabad Lake

Dawn, 17 June 2025

The Gilgit-Baltistan administration on Tuesday imposed a fine of Rs1.5 million on a hotel for allegedly dumping sewage waste into Hunza's Attabad Lake. The development came a day after a foreign tourist and vlogger named George Buckley posted a video on his Instagram page, claiming that sewage water was being pumped out by the hotel into the Attabad Lake

In the video, Buckley could be seen standing next to the lake with a friend and saying: "We found out some information through a local that the sewage is actually being pumped into the water." The tourist also showed muddy water being mixed into the lake.

The post gained significant traction on social media, prompting a response from the hotel. The hotel dismissed the claims in a social media post today, saying, "This lake has been home for us for the last six years."

"... To dump sewage water into the lake would be like desecrating our own house. We have never nor will we ever dump a single litre of wastewater into Attabad Lake."

The post also said that the muddy appearance of the water near the hotel was due to adjacent water streams carrying mud, rocks and minerals, which mixed with the lake water.

“This phenomenon is known as confluence, where two separately flowing water bodies meet. If one of the water bodies is high in turbidity, then this causes a muddy/cloudy water surface at the point of confluence.” Buckley responded in the comments section of the hotel’s video, saying, “The only document you have provided to me and the public that looks into this environmental issue was the report from July 2021.

“I’ve asked 3 times to see an inspection report after that date conducted by the EPA and local government (which was suggested to be done quarterly in the 2021 report), yet you have provided nothing over the last 17 hours since I asked the first time.” He also said that the property smelled “badly of sewage”, adding, “Nothing that a natural occurrence like the silt runoff would create, not even close.”

GB Environment Department Director Khadim Hussain told Dawn.com that the administration had taken action against the hotel on a complaint made by a foreign tourist alleging that waste from the hotel was being dumped into the lake. He said, “The administration has imposed a fine of Rs1.5 million and sealed a large part of the hotel consisting of 30 rooms from where the sewage water had entered the lake.”

According to Hussain, after the video went viral on the internet, the GB chief secretary took immediate action and sought a report from the Hunza deputy

commissioner, resulting in a 15-member team inspecting Attabad Lake today. Hussain said there was “evidence that water pollution had been found when human waste from the hotel entered the lake”.

He added: “The hotel administration was repairing the sewage line at the time when the waste had entered the lake, but there was no major pollution. The fine was imposed on the hotel for negligence.” He said that a report will be sent to the chief secretary on Wednesday to decide further steps, adding that the matter will be heard at the magistrate’s court for legal proceedings. He further said that “strict action was taken against the hotel in October 2024 for causing water pollution.”

Speaking to Dawn.com, Hunza journalist Alamgir Hussain said that the locals have protested several times against the hotel for allegedly causing “severe pollution in the lake”. “But due to its effectiveness, the administration has been avoiding action,” he alleged. Hussain said that hotels and buildings cannot be legally constructed on the banks of the lake. “The laws in this regard are also clear, but the administration is helpless before the hotel administration. If foreign tourists had not pointed it out, there would have been no action,” he said.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1917714/gb-fines-hotel-rs15m-for-allegedly-dumping-sewage-into-attabad-lake>

Trump ‘can’t force’ either side to accept Kashmir mediation

Dawn, 18 June 2025

The US State Department said on Tuesday that President Donald Trump could offer to mediate between India and Pakistan on Kashmir, but cannot force either side to accept the offer — a subtle yet significant clarification of the US position on the decades-old dispute.

“As President Trump has stated, [everyone] has the right to define its own future. He offers his help, and it’s up to whoever he is offering it to, to whether or not they’ll accept it,” said State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce, when asked about India’s continued refusal to engage with Trump’s repeated mediation offers.

This clarification indicates that while the Trump administration is open to playing a role in defusing South Asian tensions — especially in the wake of last month’s air combat between India and Pakistan that brought the region close to a nuclear crisis — it also recognises the limits of US influence.

President Trump has referred to Kashmir as a “thousand-year-old” conflict and has publicly offered to help resolve it on multiple occasions in recent weeks. India, however, maintains its long-standing position that Kashmir is a bilateral matter with no room for third-party involvement. “I wouldn’t speak to the nature of another country’s decision-making. That’s up to them,” Ms Bruce added, suggesting

a hands-off approach regarding India’s internal calculus.

“We live in a fascinating, exciting time where we got a man who can make the difference and he’s generous about making that difference. He could have chosen to have his term be about anything other than peace and making America great again, but he is stuck with that,” she said.

Ms Bruce’s comments confirm that the US views mediation as an available option — not a strategic imperative. Her enthusiastic endorsement of the president’s intentions suggests continued interest from the White House in remaining engaged with the issue.

“So, I wouldn’t speak to the nature of another country’s decision-making. That’s up to them, but, I think, all of us are grateful that we have a president who is willing to help, and wants to help,” Ms Bruce said.

The remarks fall short of putting pressure on either party, but they underscore a persistent US desire to help reduce tensions in the region — even if India remains unmoved by the US offer.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1917733/trump-cant-force-either-side-to-accept-kashmir-mediation>

Protest in Jhelum Valley for right to self determination

Daily Parliament Times, 21 June 2025

A rally was organized under the aegis of Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and

Kashmir to raise the demand of right to self-determination in Chikar calling the Bharatiya Janata Party government an enemy of peace. According to the details, a large number of citizens, including elders, youth and children, participated in the rally. The citizens were holding banners on which phrases against Narendra Modi, Rajnath Singh, Ajit Doval and Amit Shah were written.

The protestors raised strong slogans against the ongoing Indian brutality in 'occupied Kashmir'. While addressing the rally, Chairman Pasban-e-Hurriyat Uzair Ahmed Ghazali said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir have rejected India's forced rule.

He said, "The Kashmiri people rejected the biased and political decisions of the Indian Supreme Court of August 5, 2019 and December 11, 2023". Uzair said that there is no guarantee of peace in this region without resolving the Kashmir issue. "Kashmiri people want the right to self-determination, freedom, justice and peace as per the resolutions of the Security Council", he added.

Uzair said that India is taking away the rights of the Kashmiri people by implementing black laws. "Thousands of Kashmiri citizens have been imprisoned in Indian jails for demanding freedom", he stated. "Indian imperialism has besieged Kashmir and turned it into a prison where 40 million citizens are facing the worst atrocities", he lamented. Vice

Chairman Usman Ali Hashim said that peace in South Asia is linked to the freedom of Kashmir.

"The international community should fulfil its responsibilities towards Kashmir", he added. The speakers said that the United Nations Security Council should fulfil its promise of a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir. They maintained that India should know that the Kashmiri people want freedom. They opined that civilized countries of the world should take steps to resolve the Kashmir issue.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2025/06/21/protest-in-jhelum-valley-for-right-to-self-determination/>

PM 'AJK' violates the constitution and law to protect a non-state person for political interests: Ex- PM AJK Raja Farooq Haider

Daily Parliament Times, 19 June 2025

Former Prime Minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan, while addressing an emergency press conference along with former government minister Syed Shaukat Ali Shah, has said that the Prime Minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' violated the constitution and law to protect a non-state person for political interests and made an illegal attempt to declare a person as a state citizen whose state residence certificate has been proven to be fake.

He said, "The citizenship certificate of such a person has been declared fake in the light of the court's decision, but

despite this, the current government is trying to protect him by getting the cabinet to take a decision on political grounds. This is not only a mockery of the constitution of 'Azad Kashmir' but also an open conspiracy against the state identity".

He said that if today we are protecting non-state persons, then tomorrow how will we criticize India's abrogation of Article 35-A? "This duplicity will not work. We will go to every constitutional and legal forum to protect state laws and challenge this move".

He warned that "this dangerous path is being opened under which tomorrow any non-state person can come and become an employee, minister or even president and prime minister here. This is a destructive path for future generations". He said that the police and the administration violated the sanctity of the Legislative Assembly yesterday and tried to arrest former minister Syed Shaukat Ali Shah, who belongs to a respected and prominent tribe on both sides of Kashmir, from the Assembly building, which was not only an unconstitutional act but also an insult to the state parliamentary traditions.

He said that "Asim Sharif Butt's resident state certificate was declared fake by the court after several years of legal battle, but the government obstructed the implementation of the decision and an illegal attempt was made to accept a non-state person as a

state citizen." An interference. "Syed Shaukat Shah raised the question," If we take such steps, how will the state's special identity be eliminated, we have to defend our constitutional and state identity.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2025/06/19/pm-ajk-violates-the-constitution-and-law-to-protect-a-non-state-person-for-political-interests-ex-pm-ajk-raja-farooq-haider/>

'AJK' budget 2025-26: Rs49 billion allocated for annual development programme in 'Azad Kashmir'

Dawn, 19 June 2025

'Azad Jammu and Kashmir's (AJK) Annual Development Programme (ADP) for the fiscal year 2025-26 with an outlay of Rs 49 billion, including a Rs 1 billion foreign component, allocates 52 per cent to infrastructure development-related sectors, 34pc to social sectors, and 14pc to productive sectors.

Sharing a sector-wise breakdown of the allocations, Finance Minister Abdul Majid Khan said that the Communication and Works Department would receive the largest share of Rs15bn, followed by Rs 6bn for health and Rs5bn each for education and local government and rural development (LG&RD).

The energy and water resources sector has been allocated Rs4.8bn — including Rs3.2bn for hydropower generation projects and Rs1.6bn for electricity supply and network improvement. Other major allocations include

Rs2.465bn for Physical Planning and Housing (PPH), Rs2.035bn for governance and miscellaneous sectors, Rs1.4bn for research and development, and Rs1.15bn for land administration and management, including the construction and improvement of refugee colonies.

Among other sectors, Rs920 million has been earmarked for industries and minerals, Rs900m for agriculture and livestock, Rs800m each for forestry and watershed management and information technology, and Rs700m for tourism. Sports, youth, and culture have been allocated Rs500m, while Rs345m will go to development authorities.

Additionally, Rs300m has been proposed for social welfare and women development, Rs280m for the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA), Rs200m for information and media development, Rs150m each for civil defence/State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) and environment, Rs75m for fisheries and wildlife, and Rs30m for transport.

The finance minister said 52pc of the ADP funds — amounting to Rs25.21bn — had been earmarked for ongoing projects, while the remaining Rs23.79bn would go to new schemes. At the close of the current fiscal year, 76 development projects will have been completed, while the target for the next fiscal year is the completion of 167 projects, he added.

Among major recurring expenditures, education sector will get the highest share of Rs 52.786bn, followed by Rs49bn for pensions, Rs37.99bn for “State Trading” — a term used for wheat flour subsidy — Rs 31.386bn for miscellaneous grants, Rs26.274bn for health, Rs12.927bn for energy and water resources, Rs 11.346bn for home (police), Rs 9.2bn for general administration, Rs 3.89bn for law, justice and parliamentary affairs (including judiciary), Rs 2.25bn for forests/wildlife/fisheries, Rs2.01bn for relief and rehabilitation, and Rs 1.98bn for Board of Revenue.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1917994/ajk-budget-2025-26-rs49-billion-allocated-for-annual-development-programme-in-azad-kashmir>

Pakistan counters Indian claims over Pahalgam attack in Geneva

Dawn, 20 June 2025

Pakistan’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva has thwarted an attempt by India to mislead the UN Human Rights Council regarding the Pahalgam attack in ‘India-held Kashmir’.

Exercising the right of reply during the ‘Interactive Dialogue on the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights’ Annual Report’ in Geneva on Wednesday, Pakistan’s representative, Muneeb Ahmed, rejected India’s allegations, stressing that New Delhi had blamed Pakistan without evidence. He said India had dismissed calls for an independent and impartial

investigation and ignored international appeals for restraint. The dialogue formed part of the ongoing session of the UN Human Rights Council.

“Even before its own investigation authorities put out a public call for evidence, India intensified its oppression against the people of ‘Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir’. Even worse, India carried out deliberate and unjustifiable military strikes on civilians, residences, and places of worship in Pakistan,” Mr Ahmed said. New Delhi following ‘beaten path’ of invoking terrorism for geopolitical motives, says envoy

He noted that India’s reservations to common Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) regarding the right to self-determination served as a pretext for denying this fundamental right.

It underlies the Indian ‘occupation of Jammu and Kashmir’ as well as numerous other territories and is reflected in the large number of movements against New Delhi’s yoke, he said, adding, “But India is following a beaten path of invoking terrorism for geopolitical motives.”

Resolving the Jammu and Kashmir remains key to lasting peace and prosperity in South Asia and is the best safeguard against future human rights abuses, he said. “The territory of Jammu and Kashmir is not, has never

been and will never be a so-called integral part of India. It remains an internationally recognised disputed territory until the people of Jammu and Kashmir exercise their inalienable right to self-determination in accordance with numerous UN Security Council resolutions,” Mr Ahmed said.

Pakistan is ready to discuss Indian support for the menace of terrorism along Pakistan’s western borders, and unlike India, “we have the evidence to engage in a substantive conversation”, he added.

“Rather than blaming Pakistan or Muslims, we urge India to revisit its Hindutva supremacist pursuit of hegemony, uphold the Kashmiri people’s right to self-determination, and, importantly, behave like a normal country at peace with itself and its neighbours,” he said.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1918317/pakistan-counters-indian-claims-over-pahalgam-attack-in-geneva>

PML-N ‘AJK’ Secretary General Tariq Farooq lambastes incumbent ‘AJK’ coalition regime for alleged ill-disciplined policies in the State

Daily Parliament Times, 19 June 2025

Former Senior Minister of ‘AJ&K’ and sitting Central General Secretary of the Pakistan Muslim League-N (‘AJK’ Chapter) Chaudhry Tariq Farooq, while expressing disappointment about the prevailing internal political situation of ‘Azad Jammu Kashmir’ in the incumbent Prime Minister

Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq-led coalition regime, has said that what was happening in 'AJK's political horizon, seems to be part of a special plan.

Chaudhry Tariq Farooq expressed these views while expressing his views while addressing a crowded press conference at the Kashmir Press Club, Mirpur. He was flanked by the top PML-N 'AJK' leader former Director General of the Development Authority Chaudhry Ijaz Raza on this occasion.

Our Special Jammu Kashmir state Correspondent Altaf Hamid Rao reports from Mirpur that the seasoned highly educated 'AJK' politician asserted that political parties in the region seemed fallen weak and political leadership has become ineffective. He said that the current situation seems to be something even beyond at the political front in the state, as compared to the past.

Referring to the new fiscal year 'AJK' Budget for 2025-26 announced on Wednesday, the PML-N 'AJK' leader continued said "just look at the approval of the budget, which he underlined, has been passed without post budget debate in the legislature. He termed the exercise as against the parliamentary rules and regulations related to the approval of the budget.

Tariq Farooq said that the government claiming to be the champion of good governance was running away from the due accountability process. "The entire system of the 'AJK' state has been

made hostage and such exercise was never experienced in the past", he maintained.

The Secretary General of PML-N 'AJK' said that the helplessness of the members of the 'AJK' Legislative assembly stands at the stage that, what he observed, they could not speak on their own free will nor can they come out of their own free will. "The entire system has been destroyed and ruined by the incumbent 'AJK' coalition regime in the State.

"Some approve funds, others distribute them, and the next to them take credit", Tariq Farooq observed alleging that all of the exercise was happening just for the sake of securing vested interests related to a few of development schemes.

"It is regrettable that institutions, systems and setups should not be tampered with. If this unlawful and immoral exercise continues, everyone will resultantly suffer the consequences", he observed adding that 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' was a disputed region and here the system should be run with great care and wisdom.

He emphasised that it was also inevitable with regard to reformation in all public sectors of life in the state. "But it seems as if everyone was in deep sleep and no one was raising voice against the irregularities and lack of discipline in the region in incumbent regime, he maintained.

Tariq Farooq further said that the lack of appointments to constitutional posts including the 'AJK' Chief Election Commissioner and the Chairman Public Service Commission dispute passage of several months, by the 'AJK' government, was also a separate question mark.

He alleged that the current 'AJK' budget was fake. "All its figures were inked by the finance Department officials", he alleged adding the budget of the Anwar-ul-Haq led coalition ruling clique was also a mere manipulation of words and was just to appease the MLAs 'since the lives of five MLAs were in the hands of the PM Anwarul Haq', he observed.

Referring to the forthcoming General elections in 'AJK' scheduled for next year, Tariq said that now everyone will have to appear in the court of the people and the people will make the best decision. Chaudhry Tariq Farooq said that there was anger in the hearts of the electorates against the behaviour of 'AJK' political parties and what has emerged that every political party appearing in the coming polls arena in the region claimed to win 20 to 25 seats in 53-seat state Legislative Assembly.

To a question, Tariq Farooq categorically said that there were no differences in the ranks of the PML-N 'Azad Jammu Kashmir'. "But there must be differences of opinion on some issues. No one should be under any misunderstanding", he added. He said that the PML-N 'Azad Jammu

Kashmir' will fight the next elections to all seats of 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' Legislative Assembly with complete unity.

"The PML-N 'Azad Jammu Kashmir' is on one side of everything while the current parliamentary party of PML N attached with PM Anwar-ul-Haq coalition government, was on the other side, he responded to a questioner. He concluded as saying "the consequences of the mistakes of the parliamentary party of his PML N will, indeed, borne.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2025/06/19/p-ml-n-ajk-secretary-general-tariq-farooq-lambastes-incumbent-ajk-coalition-regime-for-alleged-ill-disciplined-policies-in-the-state/>

A Slow Poisoning: The Deliberate Neglect of Kashmiri Political Prisoners

Daily Parliament Times, 22 June 2025

The world often looks away from protracted conflicts, allowing suffering to become normalized. But the situation unfolding in 'Indian-administered Kashmir' demands urgent attention, not for the grand geopolitical narratives, but for the quiet, agonizing deaths occurring within its jails. The plight of Kashmiri political prisoners, systematically denied adequate medical care, is not merely a legal failing – it's a moral abrogation, a slow poisoning enacted by a state seemingly determined to silence dissent through attrition. The deaths of prominent Kashmiri political leaders like Muhammad Ashraf Sehrai,

Altaf Ahmed Shah, and Ghulam Muhammad Bhat are not isolated incidents. They are chilling symptoms of a deliberate policy of medical neglect, a pattern of denying essential healthcare to incarcerated Kashmiri leaders and activists. Currently, the situation is dire. Shabir Ahmed Shah, battling prostate cancer, is being denied proper treatment. Family members are not allowed to see him or make arrangements for his treatment. Muhammad Yasin Malik, Asiya Andrabi, Nayeem Ahmed Khan, Nahida Nasreen, Fahima Sofi, and Masrat Alam Bhat and scores of others, face deteriorating health conditions, victims of a system that prioritizes punishment over basic human decency. This isn't a case of overwhelmed healthcare systems or logistical difficulties. It's a calculated strategy, enabled and exacerbated by draconian laws that strip away fundamental rights and facilitate arbitrary detention.

The Indian state, while proclaiming itself the world's largest democracy, is actively engaging in practices that betray the very principles it claims to uphold. The legal framework protecting prisoners, both internationally and domestically, is robust. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees the right to health and prohibits cruel treatment. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights enshrines the right to life and humane treatment of detainees. Even the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the

Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) explicitly mandate healthcare equivalent to that available in the wider community. India's own constitution, under Article 21, guarantees the right to life and personal liberty – a right rendered meaningless when basic medical care is withheld. The Indian Prison Manual itself mandates medical attention for inmates. Yet, these safeguards are routinely ignored in the case of Kashmiri prisoners, replaced by a callous disregard for their wellbeing. If Kashmir is viewed through the lens of international humanitarian law, as many argue, the Geneva Conventions further solidify these protections, prohibiting inhumane treatment and ensuring medical attention for those detained. The denial of medical care isn't simply a violation of legal rights; it's a profound moral failing. To deliberately allow a cancer patient to suffer without treatment, to watch a prisoner's health deteriorate due to preventable conditions, is not just negligence – it's a form of torture, a slow and agonizing form of extrajudicial killing. The case of Khurram Parvez, a respected human rights defender imprisoned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and suffering from serious health problems, is particularly egregious, showcasing the deliberate targeting of those who dare to speak truth to power. The very laws facilitating this injustice deserve condemnation. The UAPA, with its allowance for indefinite detention

without trial, has become a tool to criminalize political dissent. Shabir Ahmed Shah, Yasin Malik, Asiya Andrabi, Nayeem Ahmed Khan, Khurram Parvez and others are just a few examples of individuals whose voices have been silenced through its broad and vaguely defined provisions.

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), granting sweeping powers and immunity to security forces, has created a climate of impunity where enforced disappearances and custodial killings are commonplace. And the Public Safety Act (PSA), allowing administrative detention for up to two years without charge, is routinely used to incarcerate political leaders like Masrat Alam Bhat, bypassing due process and undermining the rule of law. These laws are not anomalies; they are integral to a system designed to suppress Kashmiri aspirations for self-determination. They are a blatant violation of international human rights standards and must be repealed immediately. However, legal recourse within India itself appears increasingly limited. The judicial system, while theoretically independent, often operates under immense pressure and has shown a reluctance to intervene decisively in cases involving national security concerns. This is where international intervention becomes critical. The international community cannot afford to remain silent. The United Nations, human rights organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights

Watch, and individual governments must exert sustained pressure on India to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all Kashmiri political prisoners, and to guarantee access to adequate medical care for those who remain incarcerated.

This isn't simply a matter of humanitarian concern; it's a matter of upholding the principles of international law and defending the fundamental rights of all individuals. Failing to act will not only condemn more Kashmiri prisoners to suffering and death, but will also embolden authoritarian tendencies elsewhere, eroding the foundations of a rules-based international order. The world must recognize that the slow poisoning of Kashmiri political prisoners is not a localized issue, but a symptom of a broader crisis of human rights and accountability. It's a test of our collective conscience, and a challenge to ensure that the principles of justice and compassion prevail over political expediency. The time for quiet diplomacy is over. The time for decisive action is now.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2025/06/22/a-slow-poisoning-the-deliberate-neglect-of-kashmiri-political-prisoners/>

NDMA issues precautionary alert as thunderstorms pose flood, landslide risk in 'AJK', GB

The Nation, 21 June 2025

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has advised

residents of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) to take precautionary measures as flash floods and landslides triggered by thunderstorms and rain are expected tonight (Saturday).

The NDMA's National Emergency Operations Center has indicated that a weather system entering northern Pakistan from the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal is expected to interact with a westerly disturbance, potentially bringing heavy rain, strong winds, and thunderstorms to Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir this night, with a risk of flooding due to a sudden rise in water levels.

The rain, thunderstorms, and gusty winds are likely to impact Chitral, Dir, Swat, Shangla, Buner, Malakand, Kohat, Nowshera, Charsadda, Swabi, Peshawar, Mardan, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, and nearby areas from evening into the night. The severe weather conditions could uproot weak trees and result in short-term power disruptions.

According to the NDMA advisory, strong winds and dust storms may damage buildings, vehicles, rooftops, and power lines, while also reducing visibility and heightening the risk of road accidents. The public is urged to avoid trees, billboards, and loose structures to ensure personal safety during the adverse weather conditions. It advised people to Park in a secure, covered spot and limit travel during storms.

The advisory urged the public to stay updated on the latest weather conditions by using the Pak NDMA Disaster Alert App. According to the advisory, heavy rainfall heightens the risk of flooding in rivers and streams across the affected areas. Mountain roads remain particularly vulnerable, with possible traffic disruptions due to landslides. Residents in low-lying regions have been advised to stay alert, as floodwaters may pose a threat to property. Communication networks and power supply systems are also at risk of intermittent disruption due to adverse weather conditions.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/21-Jun-2025/ndma-issues-precautionary-alert-as-thunderstorms-pose-flood-landslide-risk-in-ajk-gb>

Economic Developments

'AJK's Rs310.2bn budget passed amid opposition's boycott

Dawn, 18 June 2025

The coalition government in 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) on Wednesday unveiled a Rs310.2 billion deficit-free budget for the fiscal year 2025-26, which was approved by the Legislative Assembly amid a boycott by the opposition.

Earlier today, the budget session was delayed by over two hours after five opposition members — four from the PTI and one from the Jammu Kashmir People's Party (JKPP) — staged a sit-in at the entrance of the assembly hall, protesting what they described as the

government's attempt to "bulldoze the budget".

Four to five cabinet members approached the opposition to convince them to end their protest and voice their concerns inside the hall, but they were told that verbal assurances aside, the government's "ill-will" was evident from the agenda of the budget session.

The agenda stated that after the presentation of the revised budget for 2024-25 and the estimated budget for 2025-26, the finance minister would move a motion for suspension of Rules 127, 128, 129, and 131 of the Rules of Procedure of Assembly — all pertaining to the budget process.

According to Rule 129, the speaker shall fix at least four days for open debate on the budget, provided there is a gap of two days between its presentation and the start of the debate. The coalition government has presented and passed its two previous budgets in a single day by suspending these rules.

After the ministers returned in disappointment, Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar himself attempted to persuade the protesting legislators, but also failed to bring them around. Later, treasury members made their way into the assembly hall by navigating the space on either side of the sofas occupied by opposition lawmakers, following which the Finance Minister Majid Khan was given the floor by the chair to present his budget speech.

But before the finance minister began his speech, he moved a resolution for suspension of rules, which was approved by the treasury benches with a majority vote. "Budget is not just a statement of income and expenditures, but a summary of the just distribution of available resources, future planning and official priorities," Majid Khan said.

"I am presenting a people-friendly as well as historic budget in terms of its volume, and I am sure its implementation will usher in an era of development, guaranteeing the progress and prosperity of the nation," he added.

Majid informed the House that Rs 261.2bn for recurring expenditures would be met entirely from the 'AJK's revenue receipts. Giving details of these receipts, he said Rs67.477bn would be generated through income tax collection, Rs 17.522bn from other taxes, Rs25bn from internal receipts, Rs1bn from water-use charges and Rs1.2bn from capital receipts (loans and advances). A major chunk of income — Rs149bn — would come from the 'AJK's share in federal taxes (variable grant).

Of the development budget, the finance minister informed that its volume was Rs49bn, including a foreign component of Rs1bn.

AJK's development budget is provided by the federal government as a 'development grant'. In 2023-24, the federal government had committed

Rs30bn for development work in 'AJK', but the coalition government had announced a Rs42bn development budget, claiming it would generate the remaining Rs12bn from its own resources.

However, by the close of 2023-24, the actual development budget stood at Rs25.835bn.

Similarly, while unveiling the 2024-25 budget, Majid had put the development budget portfolio at Rs44bn, but the revised figures presented today showed it had amounted to only Rs28bn.

Immediately, it remains unclear whether the next fiscal year's estimated development budget will meet the same fate, or the 'AJK' government will manage to obtain and utilise the full amount of Rs49bn.

The finance minister asserted that despite financial constraints, the government was striving to support its employees, and announced an increase in their pay and pensions "in accordance with what had been declared by the federal government".

As he concluded his speech and was about to present the budgetary demands, PML-N regional president Shah Ghulam Qadir and the party's senior leader Raja Farooq Haider took turns questioning the rationale behind the hasty passage of the budget.

"This House is supposed to hold a debate on each and every aspect of the budget. The parliament and all four

provincial assemblies are discussing their budgets. I wonder what problem the government has with holding a debate ... This is not a healthy tradition," remarked Qadir. Haider urged the government not to make a mockery of the system by using the "brute force of majority" in the House.

"There are no unusual circumstances, such as war, natural calamities or internal disturbances, that can justify this hastiness," he said. However, despite their objections, the finance minister proceeded to present the demands for grants, prompting the duo, along with their party colleague Chaudhry Ismail, to walk out of the hall in protest.

The House approved all 32 and 23 demands for grants under the recurring and development budgets, respectively. The minister also presented the demands for grants under the revised budget for the current fiscal year, which were subsequently approved by the House. After the 'AJK' Finance Act 2025 was also referred to the relevant select committee, the chair adjourned the House until June 23.

A week earlier, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb presented the proposed budget for the FY2025-26 on the floor of the National Assembly.

On Tuesday, 'AJK' cabinet approved the development and non-development budget FY2025-26, along with the Finance Bill 2025.

During the meeting, the finance secretary briefed the cabinet on the revised estimates for the current fiscal year and the proposed allocations for 2025–26, while the secretary of Inland Revenue presented details of the Finance Bill 2025. Speaking on the occasion, 'AJK' Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq said a people-friendly budget was essential to address public grievances and promote inclusive development.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1917940/ajks-rs3102bn-budget-passed-amid-oppositions-boycott>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

President 'Azad Kashmir' Barrister Sultan met with Chief Justice Raja Sayeed Ikram

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 17 June 2025

President 'Azad Kashmir' Barrister Sultan Muhammad Chaudhary had a detailed meeting with Chief Justice 'Azad Kashmir' Supreme Court Raja Sayeed Ikram Khan in President's house. The two discussed about the measures that help the people in accessing to their rights and in dispensing the justice. The meeting also served as an occasion to raise the matter of vacant positions in the 'Azad Kashmir' high court. Sayeed Ikram extending Eid greetings to Barrister Sultan, and the two had candid conversation on their common interests and other matters.

<https://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Resize-of-FRONT-PAGE-17.jpg>

For freedom of Kashmir, Pakistan is strongly fighting on all international forums: Faesal Kareem Kundi

Urdu Point, 18 June 2025

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi said that Pakistan for the freedom of Kashmir is strongly fighting on all international forums. Pakistan army defeated India and showed the whole world that it won't be easy to target Pakistan's sovereignty and integrity. Chairman People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari brilliantly put Kashmir issue in front of international community, and the world has understood that India has 'forcibly occupied Kashmir'. By granting people of 'occupied Kashmir, their right to self-determination, only then peace could be achieved in South Asia. We strongly condemn Israel's attack on Iran, and Israel's continuous atrocities in Gaza is a matter to be taken seriously and arrest Israel's terrorist activities.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-4462251.html>

From Social Media

JAMIL NAGRI @jamilnagri

18 June 2025

Most of the common land was defined as khalsa sarkar, virtually depriving the locals of any collective or individual claim on their own land.

Link to the tweet:

<https://x.com/jamilnagri/status/1935265521198346244>

WAJAHAT ALI @wajahatgilgiti

18 June 2025

Gilgit

Governor Mehdi Shah signs Land Reforms Act. Land Reforms Act comes into effect

Link to the tweet:

<https://x.com/wajahatgilgiti/status/1935357425739071964>

WAJAHAT ALI @wajahatgilgiti

19 June 2025

Contractor Sardar wins tender for Astore herb at Rs 1.4 million per kg

Link to the tweet:

<https://x.com/wajahatgilgiti/status/1935627414563918069>

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Disclaimer

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