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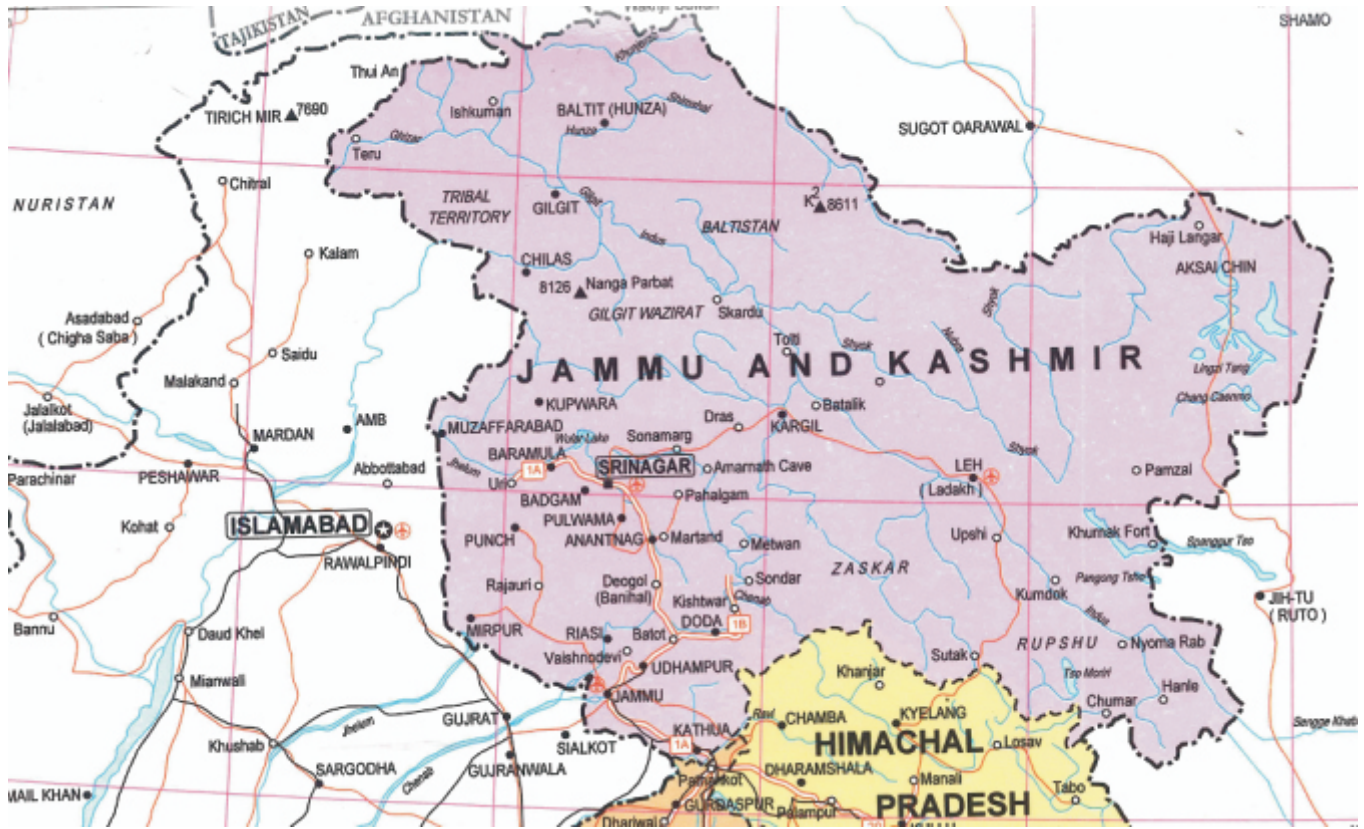
Food Shortage Triggered in Flood-hit Areas

Seven Bodies Recovered from Pakistan's 2005 Quake: Police



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Jammu & Kashmir

(Source: Based on the Survey of India Map, Govt of India 2000)

In this Edition

A report published in the New York Times has moved the world into taking notice of certain developments taking place inside PoK. The story revealed at least 7000-11000 troops of the PLA have moved in Gilgit Baltistan region of the PoK at the behest of Pakistan. The said report included in the current issue calls it a quite “geopolitical crisis” wherein Pakistan has handed over “de facto control” of PoK to China. China attempted to justify its troop presence citing the prevailing flood situation in PoK. Lately, PoK News Digest has been covering reports on the nature and extent of Chinese involvement in PoK and the likely impact such developments may have on the adjoining region.

Sectarian violence broke out in Gilgit in which several people were killed and others injured. Normal life was disrupted as curfew was imposed and shoot at sight order was issued to bring the situation under control. Subsequent arrests disclosed the involvement of local policemen in abetting sectarian tensions amongst the people.

PoK has been hit severely by floods and the calamity has cost lives of hundreds of people. The floods have displaced large section of the population in PoK and resulted in loss of property. There is delay from the authorities in providing basic relief items and goods. The delay caused public outrage and compelled people to demonstrate against state inaction. Meanwhile, China has contributed significantly to post flood relief work and sent huge quantities of food items and other goods to PoK.

Priyanka Singh

Political Developments

Selig S. Harrison “China's Discreet Hold on Pakistan's Northern Borderlands”, New York Times, August 26, 2010

While the world focuses on the flood-ravaged Indus River valley, a quiet geopolitical crisis is unfolding in the Himalayan borderlands of northern Pakistan, where Islamabad is handing over de facto control of the strategic Gilgit-Baltistan region in the northwest corner of disputed Kashmir to China.

The entire Pakistan-occupied western portion of Kashmir stretching from Gilgit in the north to Azad (Free) Kashmir in the south is closed to the world, in contrast to the media access that India permits in the eastern part, where it is combating a Pakistan-backed insurgency. But reports from a variety of foreign intelligence sources, Pakistani journalists and Pakistani human rights workers reveal two important new developments in Gilgit-Baltistan: a simmering rebellion against Pakistani rule and the influx of an estimated 7,000 to 11,000 soldiers of the People's Liberation Army.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/27/opinion/27iht-edharrison.html>

“Concern in Rajya Sabha over reports of Chinese presence in Gilgit”, PTI, August 31, 2010

Expressing concern over reports of presence of Chinese troops in Gilgit-Baltistan region in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, a BJP member today wanted to know the steps India was taking to ensure safety and security of the nation. Raising the matter during Zero Hour, Ramdas Agarwal referred to reports in New York Times about the influx of an estimated 7,000 to 11,000 soldiers of the Chinese People's Liberation Army in strategic Gilgit-Baltistan region.

"I want to ask the government how intelligence agencies failed to know about this development. Has the system totally collapsed that it was not

aware of Chinese soldiers having reached PoK," he asked. Agarwal said that at the recent Shanghai Expo, Chinese authorities took away from the Indian pavilion, brochures, which bore the map of India. "They objected to Arunachal Pradesh being shown as part of India in the map," he noted.

http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_concern-in-rajya-sabha-over-reports-of-chinese-presence-in-gilgit_1431316

Gen JFR Jacob, “Return of the Dragon”, August 31, 2010

The presence of Chinese troops in Gilgit is a matter of great concern. During the Kargil conflict, the five battalions of the intruding paramilitary Northern Rifles were maintained from Gilgit and thence from Skardu. There is a good road from Gilgit to Skardu. In pre-Partition days, road communications to Gilgit were along the Kargil-Skardu-Gilgit route. This section can easily be restored in a short period of time. The reported presence of Chinese troops in Gilgit poses a serious threat to Indian road communications to Ladakh running through Kargil.

Pakistan is now reported to have handed over control of the major part of the northern territories to China. Media reports indicate that there are some 10,000 Chinese soldiers based in Gilgit on the pretext of protecting the widening work on the Karakoram Highway and the construction of a railway line to link east Tibet with the Pakistani port of Gwadar in the Gulf of Oman.

<http://sify.com/news/return-of-the-dragon-news-international-ki5aivcedgc.html>

Iftikhar Gilani, “China placing missiles in G-B, encircling India: Jaswant Singh”, Daily Times, August 31, 2010

NEW DELHI: The Chinese military has dug tunnels in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) and is storing missiles there in an attempt to encircle India, claimed a senior leader of India's Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on August 30. Speaking in Lok Sabha,

the Lower House of Indian parliament, BJP leader Jaswant Singh claimed that the Chinese military is storing missiles in tunnels it has dug in G-B. The target of the missiles, he said, is India. Singh warned that Beijing was trying to "encircle" India. He said it has set up permanent structures in G-B in Jammu and Kashmir, which he said is "an inalienable part of India".

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C08%5C31%5Cstory_31-8-2010_pg7_31

“Chinese Soldiers in Gilgit Region: BJP wants govt to clarify in Parliament”, Tribune, August 29, 2010

Former BJP President Rajnath Singh today demanded that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh should immediately clarify the government's stand on reports that Pakistan was handing over de-facto control over the Gilgit-Baltistan region in PoK to China. Rajnath Singh stated the Prime Minister should give a statement on the issue immediately in Parliament. He said the issue of the reported influx of Chinese soldiers into the Gilgit region was serious and that complete facts in the case needed to be put before countrymen.

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2010/20100830/main6.htm>

Hameed Shaheen, “AJK cabinet urges early composite dialogue revival”, Kashmir Watch

MUZAFFARABAD: In its first formal meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan in Muzaffarabad. The AJK cabinet urged the world powers to reactivate their diplomatic and political role for the acceptable solution of the Kashmir dispute. It emphasized early resumption of the stalled composite dialogue process between Pakistan and India. In a wide-ranging unanimous resolution, the cabinet appealed to the global community to rush relief aid to save lives of millions rendered homeless by the relentless floods ravaging 20 per cent of Pakistan/Azad Jammu and Kashmir landmass.

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showheadlines.php?subaction=showfull&id=1283024486&archive=&start_from=&ucat=1&var0news=value0news

“Violence in Gilgit”, Dawn (Editorial), August 28, 2010

Normal life in Gilgit has remained severely disturbed for the past few days due to an upsurge in Shia-Sunni violence. Rival groups traded heavy fire on August 26 while some houses in the town were also torched. The arson and exchange of fire was reportedly sparked by a series of earlier 'targeted' killings, giving the violence a sectarian hue. News reports suggest that law-enforcement personnel arrived only after the groups had stopped trading fire. Some observers said the killings were the result of a personal feud; however, in a country where ethnic and sectarian hatreds are never far from the surface, the slightest disagreement can be given a communal colour. What is disturbing is that the Gilgit-Baltistan chief minister has said some police officials were involved in fanning sectarianism.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/violence-in-gilgit-880>

“Sikandar, “Turabi meets, discuss AJK political situation”, Kashmir Watch, August 29, 2010

KOTLI: Former Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Sikandar Hayat and Amir Jamaat-e-Islamabad AJK chapter Abdul Rashid Turabi held one on one meeting in Kotli on August 29. During the meeting, the two leaders reportedly discussed latest political situation of Azad Kashmir and its future perspectives. The two leaders agreed that enforcement of Islamic system which ensures supremacy of merit and freedom of Kashmir should be the main objectives of all the political parties instead of supporting the outdated and corrupt system.

http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showheadlines.php?subaction=showfull&id=1283166235&archive=&start_from=&ucat=1&var0news=value0news

Adnan Adil, “Policemen among 17 arrested in Gilgit”, August 26, 2010

GILGIT: The police arrested 17 people, including three policemen, on August 26 on charges of involvement in heavy aerial firing and torching three houses in Gilgit on August 25. The Punjab Rangers and the Northern Area Scouts were called

in to maintain law and order. The government also issued a shoot-on-sight order. Two rival groups carried out heavy aerial firing and torched three houses on August 25 near Yadgar Chowk an area where two people were shot to death, a day earlier.

http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en_GB/newsbriefs/caii/newsbriefs/2010/08/26/newsbrief-07

“Shoot-on-sight order in Gilgit after heavy firing”, Dawn, August 26, 2010

GILGIT: A shoot-on-sight order was issued after two rival groups resorted to heavy aerial firing soon after Iftar near Yadgar Chowk here on August 25, police stated. Two people were gunned down in the same area on August 24. Sources stated that paramilitary troops and police came to the area only after the shootout subsided. More than 70,000 bullets were fired. Three houses were burnt, but there were no casualties. Gilgit's assistant commissioner noted that the situation eased after the administration called in Punjab Rangers and Northern Area scouts. Police sources stated that no arrest had been made nor did they register any case. Incidents of firing were also reported from Nagaral, Kashrote, Majini Muhallah and some other parts of the region.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C08%5C24%5Cstory_24-8-2010_pg7_23

“Gilani gives Rs 50m for relief in G-B”, Daily Times, August 24, 2010

GILGIT: Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani on August 23 assured the people of Gilgit- Baltistan that he would help their government to rebuild the damaged homes and infrastructure. He gave a Rs 50 million-cheque to Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Syed Mehdi Shah for urgent purchase of food and relief goods for the flood-affected people. Gilani said that the government does not care about the negative criticism and was working for the welfare of the masses. It was said that the rains had damaged 71,000 kanals of agricultural land and 571 water channels, 182 bridges were washed away and destroyed and the Gilgit Baltistan road link with China and Pakistan was cut off as the Karakoram Highway at Basham and Sost were blocked. The

total estimate of loss was Rs 11 billion.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C08%5C24%5Cstory_24-8-2010_pg7_23

“Appeal for direct aid BNF asks world to help GB”, Weekly Baang Karachi, August 17-30, 2010

BRUSSELES: Balawaristan National Front (BNF) appealed to the international community to come to the help of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan which has been ravaged by the recent rains and floods and where hundreds of people have been killed and property worth billions of rupees lost. In a statement, BNF Chairman, Abdul Hamid Khan asked the world to provide relief items like food, medicines, clothing and materials used for reconstruction of houses. He said the aid should be given to the affected people directly instead of being channeled through the government of Pakistan. Mr Khan also announced Rs one million for the affected people and asked the world to generously help the victims who have lost everything.

http://weeklybaang.blogspot.com/2010/08/weekly-baang-karachi-volume-03-issue_24.html

“Absolute constitutional, political rights demanded for AJK, GB”, Daily Mail, August 23, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Association for the Rights of the People of Jammu and Kashmir (ARJK) on August 22 urged the government of Pakistan to ensure complete constitutional, political and representational rights to the people of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan on the pattern of other provinces. ARJK is newly found civil society organization aiming towards peaceful settlement of issue of Jammu and Kashmir and striving to obtain equal rights to territories of Jammu and Kashmir currently under administrative control of Pakistan.

<http://dailymailnews.com/0810/23/AcrossPakistan/index.php?id=2>

“Islamabad, AJK at odds”, The Tribune

ISLAMABAD: The federal government and the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)

have failed to reach a compromise over the payment of outstanding electricity dues owed by the latter. According to sources, differences also persist on a proposed increase in the power tariff charged to the independent territory. Government sources further assert that AJK has delayed payment of arrears amounting to over six billion rupees to various power providers. It has been learnt that Rs4.2 billion is owed to the Islamabad Electric Supply Corporation while the remaining amount is owed to other electricity providing companies.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/41610/islambad-ajk-at-odds/>

“AJK suffered Rs 12b losses in floods: Attique”, Pakistan Observer

ISLAMABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister, Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan stated that under relief package announced by the government of Muslim conference, Rs 10 million are being spent on daily basis as subsidy for the flood affectees. Sardar Attique, while talking to a delegation of Dudhial Tehsil Muslim conference led by President Chaudhry Javed Zafar said that despite financial constraints, the Muslim Conference would utilize all the resources to rehabilitate the victims and spend resources for the prosperity of the people of the state. Sardar Attique said that Azad Kashmir has suffered losses of Rs 12 billion from rains and floods. The government took emergency measures for the relief of the victims. He said the government would deliver on the expectation of the masses.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=48218>

Tariq Naqash, “No-trust motion ousts AJK speaker”, Dawn, August 13, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: The AJK Legislative Assembly passed a no-confidence motion against Speaker, Shah Ghulam Qadir on August 12. The speaker's ouster was a foregone conclusion after Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, who heads the Muslim Conference (MC), entered into an informal alliance with 19 MLAs belonging to different parties and groups and was re-elected to the post of prime minister, ousting Raja Farooq Haider.

<http://dawnnews.tv/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content->

library/dawn/the-newspaper/national/notrust-motion-ousts-ajk-speaker-380

“GB demands Rs. 12b for rehabilitation”, The Nation, August 21, 2010

Rs. 12 billion is required for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), stated Senior Minister GB, Muhammad Jaffar and Minister for Local Government and Development Muhammad Ismail. Addressing a press conference in Skardu, they noted that flood has damaged the whole infrastructure of GB. It has resulted in loss of not only precious lives but also property. The newly formed government of GB is not in a position to handle such a huge devastation.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/21-Aug-2010/GB-demands-Rs-12b-for-rehabilitation>

“Gilgit deprived of all basic life facilities”, Pakistan Observer

ASTORE: Gilgit, the capital city of Gilgit-Baltistan, is depicting a sorry state of affairs as the citizens are deprived of all the basic facilities of life including electricity, clean drinking water and essential food items from the past three weeks. Masses have started using traditional lamps (chimneys) and lanterns. The hustle-bustle of the city has waned and there is no traffic on the roads due to acute shortage of petroleum products, forcing the commuters to travel by foot to reach their destinations. The civic life and business has also come to a standstill.

According to details, the recent floods and landslides, as a result of torrential rains, in Gilgit-Baltistan have devastated the infrastructure of all the major districts of the region including the capital, suspending the link of the city from rest of the region. The prices of petrol and diesel have reached at 200 per liter.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=47956>

“Third flight of Chinese aid arrives in Pakistan”, August 20, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The third flight carrying the second batch of humanitarian aid from China arrived at the

Chaklala Airbase near the capital city on August 20, bringing relief goods to flood-ravaged Pakistan. As a part of the second aid, another consignment of 20 million yuan relief goods will be sent soon by land transportation from China to Hunza victims in Gilgit-Baltistan province, stated sources from the Chinese embassy in Islamabad.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-08/20/c_13454430.htm

“Floods: Gilgit Baltistan's special needs”, Dawn, August 19, 2010

Being one of the remotest regions in Pakistan and situated at a higher altitude, Gilgit Baltistan is very likely to face a serious food and medicine problem compared to other areas under flood in the country. The main problem is due to the recent fragility of the Karakoram Highway (KKH), the sole connection of Gilgit-Baltistan with the rest of Pakistan in the south and China in the north, which is damaged at every kilometer or two due to the recent heavy rains and flooding at several places. Transportation has so far been suspended. It is, therefore, difficult to get help and consignments from the neighbouring country of China.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/letters-to-the-editor/floods-gilgit-baltistans-special-needs-980>

“G-B reconnected as Highway opens”, Gilgit Baltistan Times, August 19, 2010

GILGIT: The Karakoram Highway (KKH), Gilgit-Baltistan's road link to the rest of Pakistan, was restored on August 19 as a passenger bus took off from Gilgit to Rawalpindi. Landslides triggered by torrential rains blocked the strategic KKH since July 26. At least four major bridges on the KKH had been washed away by floods and 947 other roads were been affected in the rains that lasted over 17 days.

<http://gibtimes.wordpress.com/2010/08/19/g-b-reconnected-as-highway-opens/>

“Flood victims suffering, amid AJK political blame game”, August 19, 2010

BAGH: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)

government webbed in political blame game has yet not succeeded to take steps for the rehabilitation of flood victims and restoration of the devastated infrastructure. Recent rains and floods caused by torrential rains have badly damaged the basic infrastructure besides leaving dozens of people dead and rendering hundreds others homeless. Neelum valley and Muzaffarabad district have been adversely hit by floods where flood water washed away dozens of houses, bridges and roads linking the two districts with rest of the country. Neelum valley is disconnected from rest of country for last one month. Roads have not been restored as AJK political leadership was busy in pulling down each another. Thousands of people stranded in Neelum valley were facing problems due to shortage of food, absence of medical facilities and drinking water. According to the surveys conducted at local level, about 0.25 million people have been rendered homeless due to flash floods. The people of AJK have strongly criticized the political leadership for not paying heed towards rescue and restoration activities. They demanded the AJK government, Pak Army, NGO's for immediate help in restoration of communication and rehabilitation of people back at their native lands.

<http://www.allvoices.com/s/event-6552138/aHR0cDovL3d3dy50aGVmcm9udGllcnBvc3QuY29tL05ld3MuYXNweD9uY2F0PW huJmFtcDtuaWQ9OTA4JmFtcDthZD0xOS0wOC0yMDEw>

“CM says situation worsening in GB”, Pamir Times, August 17, 2010

GILGIT: Chief Minister Mehdi Shah stated that situation in Gilgit-Baltistan is worsening due to break down of road network and civic facilities in the region. “It is beyond the capacity of the Gilgit-Baltistan government to cop with the situation,” the chief minister stated while addressing a press conference in Gilgit on August 16, asking all the segments of society to join hands in meeting this challenge. He said that he had requested the federal government to provide Rs10 billion for the rehabilitation and compensation of the affected people.

<http://pamirtimes.net/2010/08/17/cm-says-situation-worsening-in-gb/>

“Govt has equal concerns for AJK flood affectees: PM”, The Nation, August 17, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said the Federal Govt has equal concerns for all regions of country including AJK for which appropriate measures are being taken to mitigate the difficulties of the flood affectees. He was talking to AJK President Raja Zulqurnain Khan who called on him.

Gilani stated that current challenge could be effectively confronted with unity and commitment. All the political parties, he added, need to synergize their energies and prepare a comprehensive strategy that could be applied across the board in all provinces.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Islamabad/17-Aug-2010/Govt-has-equal-concerns-for-AJK-flood-affectees-PM>

Noor Muhammad, “Hanging by a tether in Gilgit-Baltistan”, August 13, 2010

A series of natural disasters has crippled life in most of Gilgit-Baltistan. Recent torrential rains have affected over 20,000 people in seven districts of the region. Around 80 lives have been lost in flood-related hazards, while critical infrastructure, including the Karakoram Highway, has been badly damaged. The worst hit village in the region is Qamra where around 42 people lost their lives and many were missing after it was hit by a flash flood on August 7.

The Karakoram Highway has been blocked and bridges in the Kohistan and Hazara regions of KhyberPakhtunkhwa province destroyed. Scarcity of essential items due to the blockade of access routes has emerged as a major problem. Government and relief agencies are facing problems in transporting relief goods to affected areas while prices in local markets have skyrocketed making goods unaffordable for many. Supply of clean drinking water has been disrupted and the spread of waterborne diseases is becoming an eminent threat due to the absence of proper health facilities.

<http://pamirtimes.net/2010/08/13/opinion-hanging-by-a-tether-in-gilgit-baltistan/>

[tether-in-gilgit-baltistan/](http://www.tether-in-gilgit-baltistan/)

“APHC-AJK holds demo outside UN office”, Kashmir Media Service, August 11, 2010

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference, AJK chapter, held a peaceful demonstration outside the office of the United Nations in Islamabad on August 11. The Convener of the Hurriyat Conference, Mehmood Ahmad Saghar, while paying homage to Sheikh Abdul Aziz, said that the blood of martyrs would not go waste. He said that martyrs were national asset, adding that the martyrdom of Sheikh Abdul Aziz had boosted the Kashmir movement.

<http://www.kmsnews.org/news/aphc-ajk-holds-demo-outside-un-office>

“25 AJK ministers take oath”, Pakistan Observer

MUZAFFARABAD: AJK Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan announced his 28 member cabinet. While a total of 25 ministers took oath of their offices, two ministers could not take oath due to their absence from the country. AJK President Raja Zulqarnain Khan administered the oath to the newly appointed ministers in Muzaffarabad. Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan was also present on the occasion.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=46604>

“Gilgit-Baltistan: Precarious Situation as Basic Necessities Run-Out”, UNPO, August 11, 2010

As monsoon rains continue to fall, the situation in Gilgit-Baltistan deteriorates. Petrol, electricity and food is rationed and the area remains difficult to access. The humanitarian aid which manages to reach Gilgit is distributed unevenly and favours some villages above others. The situation is going to get increasingly more precarious unless the government or aid agencies in one form or another do something to ensure regular transport of basic necessities into Gilgit-Baltistan. Because the Karakoram Highway (KKH) is submerged between Attabad and Ghulmit (Gojal), there is no way to bring in provisions from China.

<http://www.unpo.org/article/11493>

Imtiaz Ahmed, “Chinese aid arrives in Gilgit-Baltistan”

GILGIT: Over 30 trucks of relief goods from China arrived in Gilgit-Baltistan for those affected by the Attabad landslide lake disaster in January 2010. Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Mehdi Shah received the Chinese delegation that accompanied the convoy from China to Sost via the Karakoram Highway. “We are thankful to our time-tested friend China, which has always helped us in the time of need,” said Shah, while addressing a ceremony in Sost that was arranged in honour of the Chinese delegation.

The relief supplies include rice, grains, flour and other essential food items. According to officials, at least 3,000 tons of stuff was in the trucks, which will be sufficient for the population for the next six months during which the Karakoram Highway remains blocked due to snowfall.

<http://www.k2times.com/?p=612>

Shabbir Mir, “Clerics urged to preach tolerance, not hatred”, The Tribune

GILGIT: Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Mehdi Shah noted that his government cannot afford to experiment every time sectarian violence breaks out, to establish peace and sectarian harmony in the region. He was referring to the rounds of dialogue that the government has held in the past with representatives of rival sects, to bring about sectarian harmony. Even peace agreements, brokered by the government between top clerics of Sunni and Shia sects, have not been successful. “Clerics should support the government in maintaining peace and harmony by preaching tolerance instead of hatred,” he further noted.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/44209/clerics-urged-to-preach-tolerance-not-hatred/>

“Chinese Army on Indian territory?”, August 29, 2010

A Pakistani angle has now surfaced to the Chinese incursions into India. A 'New York Times' report has claimed that the Pakistan government has allowed

11,000 Chinese Army soldiers into Indian territory in Gilgit and Baltistan. The 'New York Times' has reported that the Chinese are eyeing this strategic region because they want to access Pakistan's Gwadar port to allow for gulf oil to reach China's eastern province.

According to the 'New York Times', China wants a grip on the strategic area to assure unfettered road and rail access to the Gulf through Pakistan. Many of the PLA soldiers entering Gilgit-Baltistan are expected to work on the railroad and extending the Karakoram Highway.

Why is China eyeing Gilgit-Baltistan?

- 1) Gilgit-Baltistan- a strategic area for China
- 2) China using Gilgit to access Gulf through Pak
- 3) Gilgit will connect Eastern China to Gawadar port
- 4) Gilgit to be used to store anti-India missiles

'Project is illegal'

India has always said Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of India. Any project within what India considers its own territory and not cleared by the Indian government is illegal. It is being ascertained what the actual position is vis-a-vis the 11,000 Chinese in Gilgit and Baltistan.

<http://www.timesnow.tv/Chinese-Army-on-Indian-territory/articleshow/4352645.cms>

“G-B council still waiting to convene”, Tribune

ISLAMABAD: The federal government failed to call a session of the Gilgit-Baltistan Council, six months after its formation. The council was constituted by the federal government under Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) Empowerment and Self Governance Order-2009 in March 2010, to satisfy a longstanding demand for greater autonomy. When asked about the unusual delay in summoning the council, deputy secretary of the council, Talah Mohammad, noted that a meeting could not be held due to some administrative matters and

engagements of the prime minister. "The council is a new body and streamlining its administrative matters will take time," he stated.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/44237/g-b-council-still-waiting-to-convene/>

Sikander Shaheen, "PPP, PML-N at loggerheads", The Nation, August 6, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Speaker Legislative Assembly (LA) Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Shah Ghulam Qadir accused the AJK Government of conspiring of making AJK a province of Pakistan and attempting to abolish its administrative character. He was sharing his views during a conversation in the wake of charged political atmosphere in AJK, amid the tabling of no-confidence move against him on August 4, in AJK's Legislative Assembly. When asked to comment on the factors contributing to the attempts on part of AJK Government for his ouster from the current office, the Speaker LA noted that he was strongly opposing the efforts of the incumbent Government to merge AJK into Pakistan as a province.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/06-Aug-2010/PPP-PMLN-at-loggerheads>

"AJK govt reshuffles higher bureaucracy", Pakistan Observer

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Kashmir government reshuffled higher bureaucracy on a large scale, stated a notification issued in Muzaffarabad. According to the notification, Commissioner Mangla Upraising project, Chaudhry Munir Hussain has been transferred and posted as Secretary to Prime Minister (PM) AJK, while Secretary to PM Naeem Sheraz has been posted as Secretary Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=45304>

"Pakistan destroys Gilgit Baltistan's heritage", August 3, 2010

GILGIT: Gilgit Baltistan in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir is a treasure trove of ancient history. But rampant smuggling of its ancient artifacts and a proposed dam which will inundate the area is likely

to destroy the rare heritage of the Himalayan region.

http://in.news.yahoo.com/139/20100803/364/twl-pakistan-destroys-gilgit-baltistan-s_1.html

"President condemns UK premier's statement against Pakistan", Associated Press of Pakistan, August 1, 2010

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Raja Zulqarnain Khan has condemned UK Prime Minister David Cameron's statement towards Pakistan and termed it a blatant negation of the country's sincere role against global terrorism. Zulqarnain stated world community should take strong note of Cameron's baseless statement against Pakistan.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=111145&Itemid=2

"Beyond limits", (Editorial), Weekly Baang Karachi, August 3-9, 2010

Even the idea, let alone passage, of the so-called 'condemnation resolution' bulldozed by Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA) in its seventh sitting was farce and beyond the jurisdiction of the house. It also claimed that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan had seceded to India through consensus after getting freedom from the Dogra rule over six decades back and still followed their decision happily. The resolution was passed 'unanimously' without any debate in the house. For the last over six decades Pakistan has accepted Gilgit-Baltistan as part of the disputed state of Kashmir waiting final resolution under the UN mandate. Even on Aug 29, 2009, the prime minister of Pakistan while announcing the Gilgit-Baltistan Self Empowerment Order at the Prime Minister Secretariat had acknowledged that it was a temporary arrangement to provide political and other rights to the people.

<http://weeklybaang.blogspot.com/2010/08/weekly-baang-karachi-volume-03-issue-23.html>

Salman Mujtaba Baltistani, "The Hunza campaign", July 31, 2010

I recently went through an article by a German professor of geography, Dr Hermann Kruetzmann,

under the heading 'The Karakoram Highway: The Impact of Road Construction on Mountain Societies', published by Cambridge University Press in 1991. In it, the author has self-termed the war of 1891 fought in the Nagar Valley, Hunza-Nagar district in Gilgit-Baltistan, between the British and locals as 'The Hunza Campaign, 1891'. Taking into account the historical context of Hunza and Nagar as two equal neighbouring principalities, I disagree with the author on the following three points: (a) In 1891, the war between the British and locals was fought at Nilt Fort in a place called Jamila Mo Har, a narrow gully between the villages of Nilt and Thole, in Nagar rather than in Hunza. (b) In a direct confrontation with the British-backed

army of the Maharaja of Kashmir, it was the fighters of Nagar who lost many personnel and still have a historic graveyard in the Thole village in Nagar sub-division. However, one cannot spot any similar memorial after the 1891 war in the Hunza region. (c) The 1891 Nagar campaign is called jangire laei, meaning 'The barrack of war', in the Burushaski language, which remains unknown or almost unknown to the people of Hunza today. Keeping in view the above-mentioned points, calling the 1891 battle in the Nagar region as 'the Hunza Campaign' might not be justified.

<http://skardu.wordpress.com/2010/07/31/the-hunza-campaign/>

Economic Developments

Ishfaq Tantry, “Cross-LoC trade”, Rising Kashmir, August 26, 2010

SRINAGAR: Even as the cross-LoC trade has resumed after over three weeks of suspension owing to the ongoing Kashmir unrest, the Valley-based traders, who missed the opportunity to capitalize on the huge demand for Pakistani dates this Ramadan, will try compensating by placing huge orders. As per officials, ninety five percent of goods received from Muzaffarabad on August 24-25 included dates, both dry and fresh category. During the holy month of Ramadan, the demand for dates increases manifold in Kashmir markets, which the cross-LoC traders of valley, however, missed due to prolonged shutdowns and curfews.

<http://www.risingkashmir.com/news/cross-loc-trade-758.aspx>

“AJK Govt starts Skilled, Green Kashmir program”, Pakistan Observer

MIRPUR: In order to produce skilled worker at local level, evening classes for imparting technical training in various professional disciplines to jobless unskilled youths are proposed to be promoted in various public-sector high school buildings throughout Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK), official sources noted. Sources stated AJK government has already inked a broad-based plan to produce skilled human resources to adjust the unemployed youths in various technical fields in private and public sector organization in AJK, rest of the country as well as abroad.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=48342>

“Industrial uplift plan evolved in AJK”

MIRPUR: An integrated broad-based plan has been evolved by the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government soon for the speedy industrial progress of AJK. Official sources stated the state

government decided to bring out the plan after the business fraternity apprised the authorities of the growing problems faced by the business community in AJK. The local business community has recently highlighted the bottlenecks in the way of speedy industrial uplift in the area.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=48399>

“BoK launches Islamic banking counters in AJK”, Pakistan Observer

MIRPUR: Finance Minister of Khyber Pakhtunhawa Engr. Muhammad Humayoon Khan stated that the government of KP including its financial institutions will leave no stone unturned to restore the flood and terrorism affected economy of the country. He said that besides the traditional banking, the BoK has also introduced the Islamic banking to attract its customers across the region.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=46513>

Rabia Noor, “Rs 9 cr goods traded across LoC” Greater Kashmir, August 29, 2010

SRINAGAR: Trade worth Rs 9.2 crore was carried out between the two divided parts of Kashmir this week via Uri-Muzaffarabad route. In exchange of Rs 3.81 crore goods exported to the Chakoti Trade Centre, PaK, goods worth Rs 5.385 crore were imported from the other side. “Of 5860 quintal goods exported this week, the major items were cardamom (big), red chilies and medicinal herbs,” said outgoing Trade Facilitation Officer Salamabad, Uri, Muhammad Ashraf Wani. He said goods worth Rs 2.06 crore and weighing 2818 quintals were exported in 41 trucks to PaK on first day of the weekly trade. On August 25, he said, Rs 1.75 crore goods were exported in 44 truckloads.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/Aug/30/rs-9-cr-goods-traded-across-loc-30.asp>

International Developments

“UNPO Appeal for Humanitarian Aid for Gilgit-Baltistan”, August 13, 2010

THE HAGUE: As the heaviest monsoon rains in Pakistan for 80 years continue into their second week, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) expressed dismay at the widespread devastation wrought by the rains and floods in Gilgit-Baltistan and mourned the loss of lives during the tragedy.

Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has not improved its operation since the disastrous response to the 2005 Kashmir earthquake when it suppressed foreign financial aid that had been intended for the region. The agency has also been unable to provide relief in the Hunza valley after a landslide blocked the Hunza river in January 2010, causing a lake to build up and submerge several villages.

<http://www.balawaristan.net/index.php/Latest-news/unpo-appeal-for-humanitarian-aid-for-gilgit-baltistan.html>

“Political reconciliation need of the hour: Majed Ismail Chaudhry”, Associated Press of Pakistan, August 21, 2010

LONDON: The Convener of the AJK People's Muslim League (AJK-PML) Majed Ismail Chaudhry said that political reconciliation and stability is the need of the hour. In a press statement, Majed Chaudhry emphasised that Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, the former prime minister of Azad Kashmir and founder of AJK Peoples' Muslim League, was holding talks with various sections of Pakistani and Azad Kashmir political landscape to encourage the democratic dialogue and the process of reconciliation.

http://www.app.com.pk/en/_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=114105&Itemid=2

“U.S. Delivers Flood Relief Supplies to Gilgit,”

Blackanthem Military News, August 30, 2010

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.: A U.S. Marine Corps KC-130 cargo aircraft flew 11,000 pounds of relief supplies into Gilgit, on August 28, delivering much-needed aid to Pakistani citizens affected by floods in the remote northern region. As with all U.S. military relief operations, the flight was conducted in partnership with the Pakistan military. Additional aid flights to Gilgit were planned in the very near future. Gilgit is the capital city of Pakistan's self-governed Gilgit-Baltistan region, located in the north of Pakistan. Known for its rugged and mountainous terrain, significant flood damage to the region's roads and bridges has made aid delivery difficult.

http://www.blackanthem.com/News/U_S_Military_19/U-S-Delivers-Flood-Relief-Supplies-to-Gilgit-Pakistan22683.shtml

“Gilgit Baltistan has Become the Valley of Dead”, August 18, 2010

BRUSSELS: Gilgit Baltistan National Congress (GBNC) held an event for the flashflood victims of Gilgit-Baltistan at Laurel, Maryland on August 12, 2010. The members and supporters of GBNC discussed the deteriorating conditions and lack of governmental support to a region, which is part of the Princely State of Jammu & Kashmir currently occupied by Pakistan. President of GBNC, Engineer Imtiaz Hussain informed the participants that the entire region is cut off from rest of the world and majority of the villages are submerged in water. He said, "Government is neglecting the repair of the roads and bridges, which obstructs relief work. The entire region is left in darkness and there is complete breakdown of system.

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/Gilgit-Baltistan-has-Become-iw-854750610.html?x=0&v=1>

Other Developments

Brian Walker, “Pakistan hospital cut off by floods struggles to help survivors”, CNN, August 26, 2010

The baby's heartbeat was failing, the mother needed medicine, and the doctors wanted clean instruments. But three weeks into Pakistan's flooding crisis, staff in one maternity ward in northern Pakistan had nothing but candles and light from a cell phone on hand to perform a high-risk emergency delivery. That was the scene that Dr. Emma Varley found in the delivery room at the Kashrote hospital in Gilgit, more than three weeks after unprecedented flooding hit the town. Torrential rains had triggered landslides from the soaring Himalayas surrounding it and floods that left the town virtually cut off from the rest of the world.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/08/25/pakistan.maternity.hospital/?hpt=T2#fbid=PDY-EnksbtV&wom=false>

“Unscheduled outage irks AJK citizens”, Pakistan Observer

ISLAMABAD: The power shortfall has further reduced to 995 MW in the country as the total generation recorded as 14,015 MW against demand of 15,010 MW. According to daily power generation report, the hydel generation stood at 6,369 MW, WAPDA thermal 2,357 MW, IPPs 5,227 MW and 62 from Rental. As many as 730 MW was supplied to Karachi Electric Supply Company (KESC), the report stated. The water level at Tarbela and Mangla dams was recorded as 1550 feet and 1206 feet respectively. Meanwhile, prolonged and unscheduled load shedding in state's capital Muzaffarabad and other cities of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) especially at Sehr and Iftar times irked the citizens.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=48606>

“Devastation and disease spread”, Tribune

As the death toll from flood-related incidents rises,

torrential water flowing from the River Indus is threatening Mochi Wala after ravaging the Shehar Sultan area of Muzaffargarh. Locals have diverted the water from River Indus towards River Chenab by opening the doors of Shehar Sultan drain, facing the Super Nur dike. Floods have wreaked havoc in Shehar Sultan's suburban areas forcing residents to evacuate their homes. Locals are making desperate attempts to save their livestock and other belongings.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/41767/devastation-and-disease-spread/>

“Food shortage triggered in flood-hit areas”, August 19, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Tens of thousands of villages in Pakistan are still under water. With most of the crops flooded, severe food shortages are being faced by the entire country. The isolated Gilgit-Baltistan region is also hit by acute fuel, medicine and food shortage due to the blockage of the Karakoram Highway for the past three weeks. Landslides and rain-triggered floods destroyed several bridges in Gilgit-Baltistan, cutting off the entire region from the rest of country.

http://www.samaa.tv/News24388-Food_shortage_triggered_in_floodhit_areas.aspx

“Landslides killed 182 in Gilgit-Baltistan: PDMA”, Tribune

GILGIT: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) said that 370 villages and 947 roads have been washed away in Gilgit-Baltistan. Asif Lodhi, PDMA director general, said that the death toll had climbed to 183 while over 2,820 households were affected in the landslides. “The calamity is unprecedented,” he noted. Lodhi said that in the past, the average rainfall recorded in the region was 45 to 55 millimetres but this summer, the rainfall was between 100 and 150 millimetres. “There is a 100 per cent increase and this is the root cause of the damages. Almost all ravines in Gilgit-

Baltistan have burst their banks,” he stated.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/40090/landslides-killed-182-in-gilgit-baltistan-pdma/>

“Efforts to pull out dead bodies from rubbles in Skardu underway”, August 9, 2010

SKARDU: Northern Scouts and local volunteers engaged in pulling out the dead bodies from the rubbles of the landslide that occurred the other day in Qamran and Ganchay. Five dead bodies out of 42 people killed were pulled out on August 8 while efforts were underway to pull out the remaining 37 people. According to details, at least 42 people were killed when landslide swept away a large area in Qamran, contiguous village of Skardu, the other day of which the dead bodies of five people were pulled out. Northern Scouts and regional volunteers took part in relief activities.

<http://www.sananews.net/english/2010/08/09/efforts-to-pull-out-dead-bodies-from-rubbles-in-skardu-underway/>

“Rains, floods devastate GB; 100 killed”, Weekly Baang Karachi, August 10-16, 2010

GILGIT: Torrential rains, floods and landsliding brought widespread destruction to Gilgit-Baltistan killing about 100 people and damaging properties worth billions of rupees. However, the exact figures of casualties and intensity of destructions to public and private properties have not been ascertained as communication links to far-off areas especially Ghizer and Skardu remained disconnected. The rains triggered landslides that washed away scores of houses and buried 45 people in Qumara village, some 30km south of Skardu. The bodies of eight people were recovered so far and the others were still missing. Official sources noted rescue and search operation for the missing had been stopped due to blocked roads and rainfall. They said the army had been called out and troops were being assisted by police, local volunteers and government officials.

http://weeklybaang.blogspot.com/2010/08/weekly-baang-karachi-volume-03-issue-24_08.html

Mushtaq Mughal, “AJK flood victims still

waiting for relief”, The Nation, August 8, 2010

ISLAMABAD: State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) is yet to distribute relief goods among flood affectees and to complete its assessment on damages in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). According to well-placed sources in SDMA, death toll has reached 63 while the number of injured person was fifty. The data collected showed that 996 houses were completely damaged, 2,785 were partially damaged, 514 shops were completely destroyed, 291 partially damaged and 313 cattle died as per data compiled so far. Hundreds of families in Neelum Valley and Haitian Districts were waiting for food and shelter.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/08-Aug-2010/AJK-flood-victims-still-waiting-for-relief>

“Bus falls into swollen river in PoK, 40 killed”, Associated Press, August 6, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: A bus plunged into a swollen river in PoK killing 40 people. Earlier, the deputy commissioner of Muzaffarabad said 20 people were killed and 20 others were missing. Pakistani authorities announced eight injured passengers had been rescued. Pakistan has been wracked by extremely heavy monsoon rains that have swollen rivers and caused devastating floods that killed 1,500 people in the past week.

<http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/bus-falls-into-swollen-river-in-pok-40-killed-42555>

“47 dead, 51 injured, hundreds houses submerged in AJK”

MUZAFFARABAD: Forty-seven people have been killed and fifty-one sustained injuries due to flood while hundreds houses have inundated in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK). According to details, in Muzaffarabad district 18 people, 9 in Neelum district, 3 in Mirpur, 4 in Kotli, 3 in Bagh, 1 in Hawali and 10 were killed in Hattian Bala. Several people have drowned in rivers, however, their bodies have not been found yet. The locals who have been residing on the low-lying areas of Jehlum and Neelum river are facing difficulties while

dozens of people have been suffering from various diseases by drinking poisonous water. However, the water level has been decreasing in these areas.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=166644>

“Seven bodies recovered from Pakistan's 2005 quake: police”, (Agence France-Presse), Hindustan Times, August 1, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: Police and rescue workers on August 1 recovered seven bodies almost five years after a devastating earthquake buried them under tonnes of rubble in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. The bodies were found at Kaamsar village, five kilometres northwest of Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK). "We have recovered seven dead bodies from the rubble. These people were trapped by the earthquake while travelling in a car," senior police official Musa Khan noted. In January 2010, the police had recovered 16 dead bodies from a passenger coach which had also been buried under rubble by the earthquake.

Khan said that the bodies discovered were beyond recognition but people were able to identify their loved ones from national identity cards and personal belongings. The 7.6-magnitude quake on October 8, 2005 killed more than 73,000 people and left around 3.5 million homeless, mainly in PoK and parts of the country's North West Frontier Province.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/Seven-bodies-recovered-from-Pakistan-s-2005-quake-police/Article1-580907.aspx>

“Villagers in fear of starvation”, Tribune

GILGIT: Residents of Gaise village in the Gilgit-Baltistan region will starve to death if the government failed to airlift food to the area in the next 24 hours. Hundreds of people are stranded in Gaise village which has been cut off from the rest of the country after flash floods and landslides destroyed vital bridges and roads.

Dozens of villagers gathered outside the chief secretary's office to protest non-availability of food in the village. “We are facing a critical situation. If the government fails to do something in the next 24 hours, scores of people, especially children and elderly, will die of starvation,” one of the protesters

stated on phone. They asked the government to “leave the casualties for the time being and try to save those who are alive”.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/39197/villagers-in-fear-of-starvation/>

“Thousands stranded in Muzaffarabad landslide”, August 16, 2010

MUZAFFARABAD: The landslide near Muzaffarabad left 0.4 million population of districts of Naseerabad and Neelam stranded. According to sources, the land link of district Neelam and district Naseerabad had also been cut off from the rest of Muzaffarabad. The residents of Naseerabad and Neelam faced scarcity of food and other necessities. The truck loaded with food items and other relief good was sent back to Muzaffarabad due to landslide. The affectees of Neelam valley and other areas were forced to travel on high mountains while observing fast during Ramadan.

http://www.samaa.tv/News24247-Thousands_stranded_in_Muzaffarabad_landslide.aspx

“Additional water may go waste, yet again”, August 12, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Owing to the differences between the governments of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the additional water might not be stored in the Mangla Dam in the current year. The additional water is likely to go waste despite the worst floods in the country's history, sources stated. The Mangla Uprising Project was completed two years ago with an estimated cost of more than Rs. 100 billion. After the completion of the new project, the Mangla Dam has the capacity to store up to 2.6 million acre feet of additional water.

http://www.samaa.tv/News24090-Additional_water_may_go_waste_yet_again.aspx

“20 FM radio stations join hands for community peace building”, Associated Press of Pakistan, August 1, 2010

ISLAMABAD: About 20 FM radio stations from Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Islamabad would jointly organize an orientation training workshop to engage local communities through radio for

community peace building here on August 2. Producers and presenters including seven from AJK and 13 from Islamabad would be attending the training being jointly conducted by Intermedia, a Pakistani media development organization that works on advocacy, research and training on media issues, as stated in press release on August 1. The training is a follow-up on the landmark Radio

Partnership for Peace (RPP) created in June in Islamabad by 60 independent, government and campus FM stations from all over Pakistan, including the Educational Broadcasters Forum.

http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=111109&Itemid=2

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir-An Overview

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK): An Overview

Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) is constitutionally an integral part of the Indian Union and remains under Pakistani occupation since 1947¹, when Pakistan's Army engineered a tribal invasion and took control of more than 114,500 square kilometers of J&K. Pakistan declared its occupied part as 'Azad' or free and conferred to J&K Muslim Conference, a pro-Pakistani local political party, to constitute its first titular government.

Subsequent to occupation, Pakistan embarked on the agenda of usurping J&K. First to be annexed was Gilgit-Baltistan, which went under the direct control of Pakistan in 1949, as the leaders of AJK Muslim Conference were forced to hand over these regions of J&K through the 'Karachi Agreement'. Likewise, Shinaki Kohistan and Chitral, which constituted parts of Jammu & Kashmir before its partition in 1947, were also annexed and merged into the NWFP of Pakistan in 1955 and 1970 respectively. Later, when Pakistan and China agreed to demarcate 'international border' in 1963, Pakistan provisionally ceded 19,313 sq. kilometers of trans-Karakoram track of J&K including the segment of Baltistan known as 'Shaksgam' and part of Gilgit called 'Raskam' to China.²

Salient features of PoK are as under:

Total Area of PoK (under the current form): 85,793 sq. kilometer

Administrative Divisions: Two, namely Mirpur-Muzaffarabad (referred to as Azad Jammu & Kashmir or AJK by Pakistan) and Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan (FAGB).

Area ceded to China by Pakistan: 19,313 sq. kilometer

Area of Chitral: 14,850 sq. kilometer

Area of Shinaki-Kohistan: 5,398 sq. kilometer

AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR (AJK)

The Muzaffarabad district of Kashmir province, Mirpur and parts of Poonch districts of Jammu province have been under Pakistan's control since the tribal invasion of 1947. Pakistan amalgamated these districts together and created the so-called AJK. AJK is the south-western political entity of the former princely state of Jammu & Kashmir. It borders the present-day Kashmir province to the east, Jammu province to south-east (both separated from it by the Line of Control), the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan (NWFP) to the west, the Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan Region (FAGB) of J&K to the north, and the Punjab Province of Pakistan to the south. AJK is envisaged as an autonomous region by Pakistan. The government of AJK is considered as a parallel government, which was established to challenge the legitimacy of the J&K government in Srinagar. Despite the fact that AJK is neither a country nor a province of Pakistan, it has its own President, Prime Minister, High and Supreme Courts, Penal Code, national anthem and a flag. These structures and the designations are only titular in nature and real authority lies with the federal government of Pakistan. Significant matters such as defence, tax revenues, supposed 'foreign policy', rehabilitation of refugees and the financial control have been carefully placed under the discretion of the political establishment of Pakistan.

Currently, the parts of Kashmir province under PoK is divided into three districts of Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Neelum, while the parts of Jammu province under PoK is divided into five districts namely Poonch/Rawalakot, Sudhnati/Pallandari, Bhimber, Kotli and Mirpur.

Area of AJK: 13,297 square km

Population: 2.973 million (1998 population census), Male, 1.850 million; Female, 1.832 million

Capital: Muzaffarabad

Kashmir (Muzaffarabad Division) comprises of 3 districts: Bagh, Muzaffarabad and Neelum

Jammu (Mirpur Division) comprising of 5 districts: Bhimber, Kotli, Mirpur, Sudhnati/Pallandari and Rawalakot/Poonch

President: Raja Zulqarnain Khan

Prime Minister: Raja Farooq Haider Khan

Political Structure

AJK Council: Total 12 members, selected by Prime Minister of Pakistan, six each representing governments of AJK and Pakistan. The AJK Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

AJK Legislative Assembly: Total seats are 49, of which 29 are directly elected from the AJK, 11 are elected from various districts of Pakistan under the provision for the 'Kashmiri refugees', whereas 8 seats are reserved for females, overseas Kashmiris and the technocrats.

Judicial System: AJK has its own High and Supreme Courts, which are assisted by district session and magistrate courts. Further, AJK has its own Bar Council and Penal Code. However, approval of chief justices for High and Supreme Courts comes from Pakistani-dominated AJK Council. In addition, Pakistan's military tribunals also function in AJK. The Chief Secretary, regional commissioners, and Inspector General of Police are also appointed by Pakistani minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan (KAGB), previously known as Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (KANA).

Ethnic Groups: Gujjars, Jats, Mughal, Rajputs, Sudhan, Awan, Qureshi, Pashtuns, Shins, Ladakhi, Baltis etc.

Religious Groups: Sunni, Ahlehadith, Shia, Nurbakhshi, Christians, Qadianis, Hindus

Languages: Punjabi, Hindko, Pahari, Kashmiri, Balti, Puriki, Shina

Political Groups: United Jammu and Kashmir Peoples' National Party, AJK Muslim Conference, International Kashmir Alliance, JK National Party,

Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (Amanullah), Peoples United Action Committee, All Parties National Alliance (APNA)

Federally Administered Gilgit-Baltistan (FAGB)

Gilgit-Baltistan was previously referred to by Pakistan as the Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA). It is the northernmost political entity within the Pakistan occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoK) and is under direct control of the Islamabad government. The area, after separation of Chitral and Shinaki Kohistan, is still five and half times bigger than AJK. It borders Ladakh and Tibet to its east; East-Turkestan to its north; Afghanistan and Tajikistan to its north-west; Chitral to its west; Dir, Swat, Kohistan and Kaghan districts of NWFP to its south while AJK and the Kashmir Valley lie to its south-east. Before 1947, Baltistan was part of Ladakh region and ruled through the Jammu provincial government, while Gilgit was ruled under the authority of Kashmir province. When Pakistan occupied these regions, they were amalgamated under the garb of so-called 'Northern Areas' and thereby received the status of federally controlled region in 1974. However, the status of Gilgit-Baltistan is left undefined in the successive constitutions of Pakistan. Pakistan accepts Gilgit-Baltistan as part of the Princely State of Jammu & Kashmir, however, does not consider it as part of AJK. Due to a direct control imposed from Islamabad, the locals still await constitutional and judicial rights. For instance, they lack representation in the Pakistani Parliament, Council of Common Interests (CCI), Hydro-electric Board and National Finance Commission (NFC). Further, they cannot access the provincial high courts and the Supreme Court of Pakistan for justice. The Judicial Commissioner exercises judicial powers in Gilgit-Baltistan who is a political figure nominated by the Minister for KAGB.

After occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan in 1949, Pakistan administered the region under the draconian and inhumane Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) for around 20 years.³ PM Z.A. Bhutto of Pakistan abolished FCR in 1974 and introduced an ad-hoc presidential ordinance to govern the region. Since then, Gilgit-Baltistan has

been ruled by presidential ordinances, which have come under repeated amendments. In 1994, PM Benazir Bhutto promulgated Northern Areas Governance Order which was later renamed as Legal Framework Order (LFO) by President Musharraf in 2007.⁴ In essence, they all remained as ad-hoc ordinances without any constitutional cover.⁵ As pressure from both local and international political and human rights organizations increased with demands of genuine political and judicial rights for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan announced the so-called 'Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order' on October 26, 2009.⁶ Unfortunately, this order is yet another presidential ordinance with no parliamentary backing, and replaces the current LFO with some amendments.⁷ The term 'self governance' is coined as a strategic move to defuse pressure of the international organizations, which promises to introduce administrative, political, economic and judicial reforms in Gilgit-Baltistan. Although the ordinance is claimed as a replica of the AJK political and judicial system; it refuses the post of president, prime minister to the locals and establishment of penal code, and High and Supreme Courts.

According to the order, Northern Areas will be called Gilgit-Baltistan and the current Northern Areas Legislative Assembly (NALA) will be replaced by Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA), which will have the right to legislate and choose a chief minister. Further, Pakistan will replace the existing Chairman of NALA with a governor to ensure federal government's control over the region. Gilgit-Baltistan would also have its own public service commission, a chief election commissioner, an auditor general, and a boundary commission to settle boundary dispute between Pakistan and J&K. The legislative assembly of Gilgit-Baltistan would have a total of 33 members, including six reserved seats for women and three for technocrats. Further, similar to AJK Council, Gilgit-Baltistan Council will be constituted to ensure representation of federal government in the region. The council will enjoy legislative powers over 60 odd subjects. It will have 15 members

which shall be presided over by the prime minister of Pakistan. While the Assembly is given the powers to propose the budget, approving authority will be ministry of KAGB in Islamabad. Compared to the provinces of Pakistan, where the chief minister is the supreme authority, the newly proclaimed order rests all administrative, political and judicial authority with the Pakistani governor which will eventually make the assembly a toothless tiger. Governor will be the executive authority and custodian of tax and revenues. He will administer Gilgit-Baltistan council on behalf of the prime minister of Pakistan, and oversee public service commission, election commission, boundary commission, judiciary, and auditor general's office. He will be the authority to appoint heads of public service commission, election commission, boundary commission, commissioner of excise and taxation, chief judge of appellate court, auditor general, regional cabinet members and advisors. He will have the right to approve the budget, and dissolve the assembly and impose emergency under prescribed conditions. Further, the Inspector General of Police, Chief Secretary and all departmental secretaries, directors of departments, and commissioner and deputy commissioners of districts will be appointed by the governor. Likewise, it will not be the Assembly but the Council under the governor, which will legislate on natural resources of Gilgit-Baltistan, including minerals, forests, electricity and water storage, industries, school curricula, tourism, cinematography etc.

Salient Features of FAGB are as under:

Area of FAGB: 72,496 sq. kilometer

Population: 870,347 (1998 population census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: seven

Baltistan Region (part of Ladakh) is divided into Ganche and Skardu districts

Gilgit Region is divided into Astore, Diamer, Ghizer, Hunza-Nagar and Gilgit districts

Ethnic Groups: Shin, Balti, Puriki, Ladakhi,

Wakhi, Yashkun, Tibetan, Mongol, Tatar, Mon, Pashtun, Khowar, Dom, Gujjar, Rajput and Kashmiri

Religious Groups: Shia (Twelvers), Nurbakhshi (Twelvers), Ismaili, Sunni, and Ahlehadith

Languages: Shina, Balti, Wakhi, Khowar, Gujjari, Burushaski, Puriki, Kashmiri, Pashto

Political Structure: In July 2009, NALA was dissolved before it could complete its 5-years term, and along with that, advisors to the Chairman including the Chief Executive were also sacked. Subsequently, election for GBLA was held on November 12, 2009 under the newly proclaimed self-governance and empowerment order. Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the ruling party of Pakistan, won two-third majority in GBLA and formed government.

Gilgit-Baltistan Council: Total 15 members, selected by Prime Minister of Pakistan; 7 representing government of Gilgit-Baltistan and 8 representing government of Pakistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Further, Chief Minister, Governor, Minister for KAGB and Prime Minister of Pakistan are voting members of GBC.

Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Council: GBLA has 24 directly elected members while 6 female and 3 technocrats come through selection.

Governor of G-B: Dr Shama Khalid

Chief Minister G-B: Syed Mehdi Shah of Skardu district.

Political Groups: Balwaristan National Front (BNF), Gilgit-Baltistan Thinkers Forum, Gilgit-Baltistan United Movement (GBUM), Baltistan National Movement, Karakoram National Movement, Gilgit Baltistan Democratic Alliance (GBDA), Gilgit Baltistan National Alliance (GBNA), All Parties National Alliance (APNA)

Judicial Structure: Instead of High and Supreme Courts, Gilgit-Baltistan will have an appellate court which will be headed by the chief judge. The chief judge, as well the session and district judges will be appointed by the Pakistani prime minister. In

addition to the appellate court, there will be a chief court in Gilgit. The number of judges has been increased from three to five. In addition, Pakistan's military tribunals will continue to function in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Literacy rate: 15% male; 3.5% female (World Bank estimates of 1997)

Per Capita Income: PCI of Gilgit-Baltistan is around one-fourth of Pakistan's average (US\$264 compared to Pakistan's US\$ 1,071).⁸

State of Infrastructure: More than two-thirds of the villages lack potable water, electricity, telephone, health units, girls' schools, paved roads, ration depot, and pony tracks.

Endnotes

1. Baltistan was occupied by Pakistan a year later in 1948
2. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2754976?seq=7>
3. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/world/pakistan/law.htm>
4. <http://ips-pk.org/content/view/234/259/>
5. <http://www.kashmirnewz.com/a0012.html>
6. <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/thenewspaper/national/gilgitbaltistanpackage-termed-an-eyewash-089>
7. <http://www.kashmirnewz.com/a0012.html>
8. AKRSP Socio-economic Survey of Northern Areas and Chitral (SESNA-C) 2005; http://www.finance.gov.pk/finance_blog/?p=238; <http://finance.kalpoint.com/pdf/highlights/todays-pick/per-capita-income-falls-to-1071.pdf>

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PoK 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 as 'Azad Kashmir' and 'Gilgit Baltistan' by the government of Pakistan. The news reports have been abridged to provide clarity. IDSA is not responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the news items.

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