

# POK NEWS DIGEST

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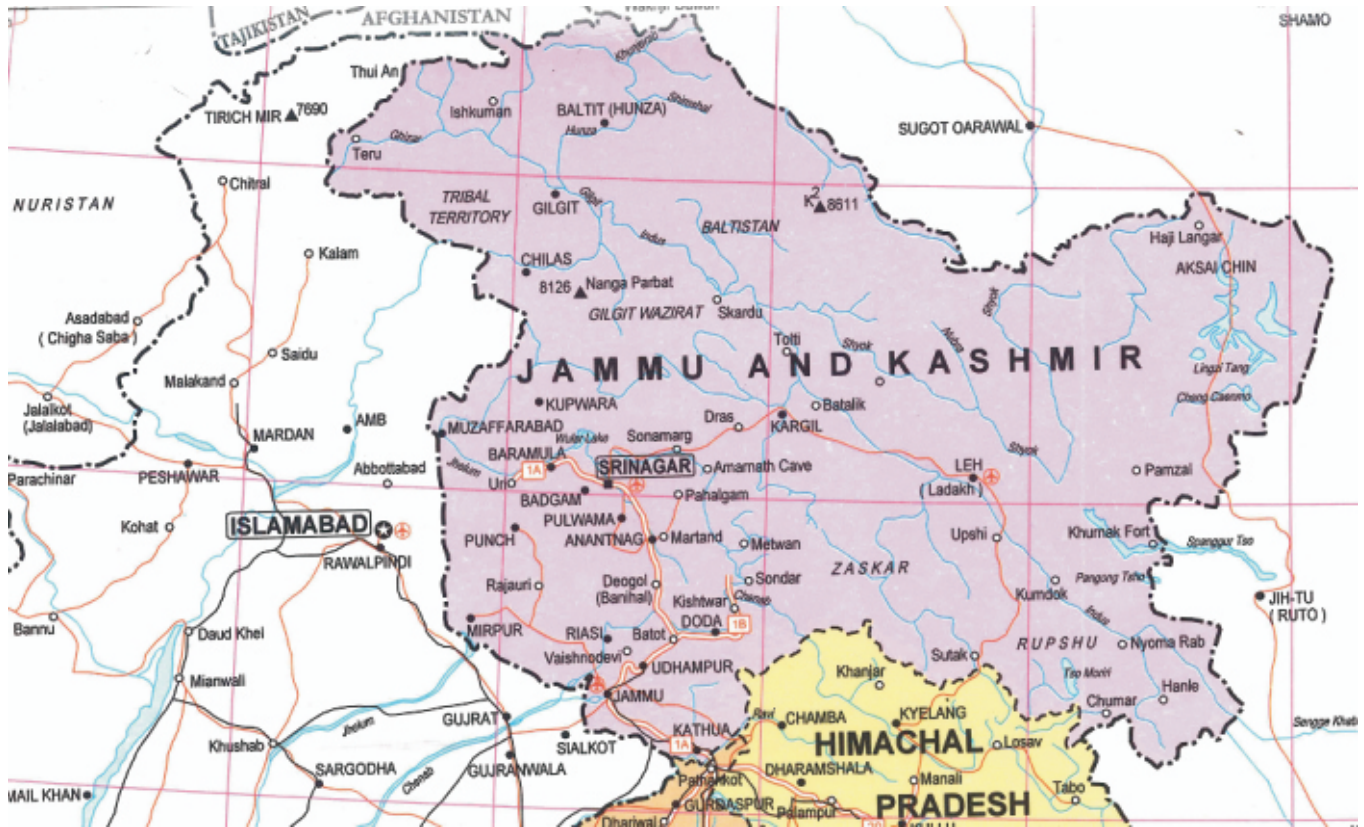
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Compiled & Edited  
by  
Dr Priyanka Singh

**INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES**  
No. 1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg  
New Delhi-110 010



## Jammu & Kashmir

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

## **In this Edition**

*The WAPDA (Water and Power Development Authority) has been urged to expedite the process of land acquisition for the controversial Bhasha Dam during a seminar held in Islamabad on January 6, 2011. Alongside, a resettlement plan for the affected people was proposed in the same conference where there was large scale participation from major stakeholders. In the next eight months, the WAPDA seeks to complete the construction of 5 small dams which would significantly improve the power generation capability in Pakistan and PoK. On the other side, the local body elections in Gilgit Baltistan are scheduled to be held in March 2011 in order to ensure good governance and welfare of the common people, as noted by the a provincial minister, Engineer Ismail. Meanwhile in Gilgit Baltistan, the PPP led government has stated it is determined to carry out developmental activities.*

*The rehabilitation work in the flood affected areas in the so called AJK was marred by the cold weather which generally is hostile to such activities. People rendered homeless by the calamity were hence left struggling without proper shelters and facilities. In addition, there is a report in the issue which describes the state of corruption in PoK by citing the case of fake certificates furnished by a minister in the elections. His appointment was later declared null and void by the Supreme Court.*

*There are indications that US is getting involved in certain projects in PoK as part of its larger commitment to infrastructure building in Pakistan. If proved correct in due course, the development could adversely impact the Indo US relations especially in the long term perspective keeping in view India's sensitivities on PoK.*

***Priyanka Singh***

# Political Developments

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## **Gilani says GB given autonomy for welfare of people**

*Daily Times, January 23, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani stated on January 22 that the sole objective of according autonomy to Gilgit-Baltistan was good governance and welfare of the people. He stressed the need for timely implementation of his public announcements made during his visits to Gilgit-Baltistan regarding rehabilitation and development of the area. Talking to Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Mehdi Shah at the Prime Minister's House, Gilani asked him to appoint competent officers at key positions to ensure public welfare. He also enquired about the progress of work on drainage of Attaabad Lake and rehabilitation of flood affectees as well as the infrastructure.

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011\01\23\story\\_23-1-2011\\_pg7\\_15](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011\01\23\story_23-1-2011_pg7_15)

## **PML-N launches membership drive in AJK**

*Pakistan Observer, January 23, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: The membership campaign of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was launched on January 23 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir with former president and Prime Minister Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan becoming its first member. The membership was started at a ceremony held at the residence of former AJK president and elder Kashmiri leader Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan in the presence of central leaders, district organizers and a large number of workers.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=72720>

## **Shabbir Mir, Section 144 imposed: Locals told to stay away from frozen lake**

*The Express Tribune, January 23, 2011*

GILGIT: The Hunza-Nagar administration imposed

Section 144 to keep away from the frozen Attabad lake in an attempt to prevent mishaps, residents and officials stated on January 23. "The decision has been taken in the larger interest of the people of Hunza and Gojal," the Deputy Commissioner of Hunza-Nagar Zafar Waqar noted. The 23-kilometer long lake was formed in January 2010 after a massive landslide, which blocked the Hunza River at Attabad.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/108285/section-144-imposed-locals-told-to-stay-away-from-frozen-lake/>

## **CM GB discusses law and order situation with President, PM**

*January 24, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan, Syed Mehdi Shah called on President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani separately on January 24. Matters relating to law and order situation, development projects initiated by the incumbent government and measures taken for the rehabilitation of flood affectees in Gilgit Baltistan came under discussion during the meeting.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=174176>

## **Peer Muhammad, Gilgit-Baltistan: Pir Karam Ali Shah picked to be governor**

*The Express Tribune, January 25, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: The federal government decided on January 24 to appoint Pir Karam Ali Shah as the new governor of Gilgit-Baltistan. The post was lying vacant for more than four months after the death of the first G-B Governor Dr Shama Khalid, who died on September 15, 2010. Sources stated that the decision was taken by President Asif Ali Zardari in consultation with Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and other party leaders. However, a notification to this effect has not yet been issued. It

is likely that the notification will be issued on January 25.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/108747/gilgit-baltistan-pir-karam-ali-shah-picked-to-be-governor/>

### **Gilani orders feasibility for all-weather Gilgit airport**

*Business Recorder, January 25, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani on January 24 directed preparation of a feasibility report for an all weather international airport and an IT university at Gilgit. Gilani had announced up-gradation of the Gilgit airport in September 2009 to cater to larger aircraft in all weather conditions. Currently bad weather closes down the airport for days.

<http://www.brecorder.com/news/business-and-economy/pakistan/1147743:news.html>

### **Shabbir Mir, Spillway widening: Attabad Lake draining efforts remain unsuccessful**

*The Express Tribune, January 27, 2011*

GILGIT: Efforts to drain water from Attabad's accidental lake proved unsuccessful as water released on January 26 made no impact on the spillway or the lake's overall level. "The spillway has been opened and water is being flushed out but not in quantities sufficient to drain the lake," Deputy Commissioner Hunza-Nagar Zafar Taj noted.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/109741/spillway-widening-attabad-lake-draining-efforts-remain-unsuccessful/>

### **Punjab Police in Gilgit-Baltistan: Mehdhi Shah**

*January 21, 2011*

The Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan has bitterly criticized the performance of the local police department and has warned to seek the services of Punjab Police if the local police continues its sluggishness. "I have increased their incentives and almost doubled their salaries but their performance is still zero" He commented about the performance of the local police.

<http://www.dardistantimes.com/content/punjab-police-11gilgit-baltistan-mehdhi-shah22>

### **Mangla Dam: WAPDA pays remaining compensation to AJK**

*The Express Tribune, January 19, 2011*

LAHORE: The Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) has paid the remaining amount of Rs3 billion to the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on account of compensation for the residents affected by the Mangla Dam raising project.

According to Wapda, complete payment for land acquisition and property for the Mangla Dam project has now been made and the AJK government has started disbursement of the amount to the affected people. The process will be completed by the end of next month and after that the displaced people will be given sufficient time to construct houses on alternative locations.

Wapda said the development has paved the way for filling the Mangla Dam, whose capacity had been increased in 2009 but water storage could not be started due to non-payment of compensation money caused by the financial crunch. Now, Wapda has planned to start test-filling of the water reservoir up to 1,230 feet above mean sea level this year. The Mangla Dam raising project is being completed at a revised cost of Rs101 billion, out of which Rs64 billion has been allocated for resettlement of residents alone.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/105835/mangla-dam-wapda-pays-remaining-compensation-to-ajk/>

### **National Kashmir Conference on Feb 3: Turabi**

*January 20, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Abdul Rashid Turabi stated that political leadership of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir will attend a national Kashmir conference on February 3 to observe solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Turabi said that seminars and conferences on Jammu and Kashmir will be held in all district headquarters of Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

<http://www.sananews.net/english/2011/01/20/national-kashmir-conference-on-feb-3-turabi/>

## **Hameed Shaheen, NGOs consortium soon in AJK: Attique**

*January 20, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan Prime Minister of AJK noted the role of local, regional and international NGOs is being institutionalized to give them space in economic planning, projects execution and welfare initiatives in AJK. He made this announcement in his winding-up address as chief guest in the Muslim Charities Forum Conference in Islamabad on January 19. Representatives of Forum's constituents the Human Appeal International, the Human Relief Foundation, the Muslim Hands and the Islamic Relief participated.

[http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showheadlines.php?subaction=showfull&id=1295468407&archive=&start\\_from=&ucat=1&var0news=value0news](http://www.kashmirwatch.com/showheadlines.php?subaction=showfull&id=1295468407&archive=&start_from=&ucat=1&var0news=value0news)

## **Int. community should help Pakistan to bear massive economic cost of war on terror**

*Business Recorder, January 20, 2011*

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Information Minister Mehmood Riaz stated on January 19 that the international community should help Islamabad to cope with the massive economic cost it is paying for fighting against terrorism and extremism. Pakistan is playing an important role in the war against terrorism and has suffered more sacrifices than any other country hence the world powers should acknowledge its key role by assisting it economically, he noted in an interview.

<http://www.brecorder.com/news/latest/17954:int-community-should-help-pakistan-to-bear-massive-economic-cost-of-war-on-terror.html>

## **Shutter Down Strike in Gilgit-Baltistan for Blasphemy Law**

*January, 2011*

Rights champions in Pakistan maintain that the blasphemy law in the country is used as tool to prosecute the minority groups and to fulcrum the religious hegemony over the majority people of Pakistan. An amendment reportedly was proposed

in the Blasphemy Act of the constitution which gives death sentence to those who found guilty of blasphemy.

On the call of Tahafooz E Namoose Resalat and other religious groups, a comprehensive shutter down strike was exercised nationwide in Pakistan including the regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. Markets in Gilgit city were closed completely on Friday. After the Friday prayer a huge rally was headed by Qazir Nisar of Ahle Sunnat Waljamat of Gilgit-Baltistan and Kohistan that passed through Gari Bagh, Saddar and Airport Road and ended at Airport Chowk forming a huge assemblage. Several of the religious leaders addressed the rally.

<http://www.dardistantimes.com/content/shutter-down-strike-2gilgit-baltistan-4bl09asphemy-law>

## **Meeting reviews arrangements for Kashmir day**

*Associated Press of Pakistan, January 19, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: A high level meeting of the Inter-Ministerial and Provincial Coordination Committee held in Islamabad on January 18 to finalize the arrangements for observance of Kashmir Solidarity Day falling on February 5. Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan, Mian Manzoor Ahmad Wattoo chaired the meeting and a comprehensive strategy was devised to observe the day. The meeting decided that one-minute silence through out the country would be observed on February 5 and human chain would also be made at Kohla point, as noted in a press release.

[http://app.com.pk/en/\\_index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=127993&Itemid=2](http://app.com.pk/en/_index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=127993&Itemid=2)

## **Shabbir Mir, G-B assured of continued supply of wheat: minister**

*The Express Tribune, January 14, 2011*

GILGIT: The Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) assured the Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) government that it will not suspend wheat supply to the region, even though the latter owes over Rs6 billion to the former, officials noted on January 13.

“We have discussed the issue with the PASSCO chairman and the issue stands settled now,” noted G-B Food Minister Mohammad Jaffar. He said that the supply of wheat to G-B had been stopped earlier by PASSCO as the region had failed to provide the outstanding amount of over Rs6 billion.

Jaffar who is also the Senior Minister in the G-B government, stated the previous government of Pakistan Muslim Leaguer-Q (PML-Q) defaulted on the payment to the corporation. “We inherited this debt from the previous government,” he remarked.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/103518/g-b-assured-of-continued-supply-of-wheat-minister/>

### **People of Gilgit-Baltistan are with PPP**

*The News, January 2, 2011*

Adviser to the Chief Minister Sindh on Information Sharmila Farooqui stated that President Asif Ali Zardari won the hearts of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan by giving them a development package. The present democratic government was paying full attention to the development of the region, she noted while talking to Jamil Ahmed, deputy speaker of the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly, on January 1.

The adviser noted that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan were peaceful and very happy with the Pakistan People's Party government. Farooqui added that due to the political reconciliation policy of President Zardari, Gilgit-Baltistan was heading towards political stability and financial prosperity. She further noted the government would get rid of the menace of terrorism and would promote tourism, because Gilgit-Baltistan was one of the most beautiful areas of the world.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=23432&Cat=4&dt=1/2/2011>

### **Govt committed for development of Gilgit-Baltistan**

*Business Recorder, January 1, 2011*

The present democratic government is committed

towards the development of Gilgit-Baltistan. This was stated by the Adviser to the Sindh Chief Minister, Ms. Sharmila Faruqui. She was talking to the Deputy Speaker of Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly, Jamil Ahmed, in her office on January 1. Ms. Faruqui noted that President Asif Ali Zardari won the hearts of the people Gilgit Baltistan by giving the Gilgit Baltistan Package. She said that the people of Gilgit Baltistan were peaceful and they were very happy with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Government. Ms. Sharmila Faruqui added that due to political reconciliation policy of President Asif Ali Zardari, Gilgit Baltistan was heading towards political stability and financial prosperity.

<http://www.brecorder.com/news/latest/17364:news.html>

### **Roshan Mughal, Compounding the misery: Relief efforts halted in AJK**

*The Express Tribune, January 2, 2011*

MUZAFFARABAD: With the first snowfall of the season in upper Neelum and Jhelum valleys, Rawalakot and Haveli districts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, most of the humanitarian organisations have halted their operations in quake and flood-stricken areas.

“The relief and rehabilitation operations have been temporarily suspended on December 31 as high-altitude areas of the flood affected region received winter's first snowfall and plains took lashing of moderate rain, compounding the miseries of homeless flood victims,” Mubashar Niaz, chief of HEED Association, a humanitarian organisation noted in Muzaffarabad after returning from Neelum valley.

We have temporarily called back our technical and volunteer staff engaged in humanitarian work in Jagran areas of Neelum district after receiving reports that winter conditions are severely hampering the relief and development operation in the area, noted Niaz.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/98032/compounding-the-misery-relief-efforts-halted-in-ajk/>

## **PPP to clean sweep in next AJK polls: Wattoo**

*January 3, 2011*

KOTLI: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, Manzoor Ahmed Wattoo noted on January 2 PPP leadership by sacrificing their lives have proved that the country and its interests are dearer to them than their personal interests. He expressed these views while addressing a PPP public meeting being the chief guest here in Kotli Azad Kashmir on Sunday.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=173163>

## **Shabbir Mir, Black day observed in Gilgit, Hunza**

*The Express Tribune, January 5, 2011*

GILGIT: As people affected by the Attabad landslide-triggered lake gathered in Gilgit to observe its first anniversary, the government in Hunza imposed a ban to stop processions and rallies planned by protesters as part of the January 4 black-day. "We want action not words," chanted the protestors who were holding placards on January 4.

Last year, on January 4, as many as 20 people perished, including children and women, after a small hamlet called Attabad in Hunza plunged into the Hunza River. This occurred following the creation of a natural lake that has now expanded 23 kilometres upstream and has submerged four villages. The lake has marooned over 25,000 inhabitants of Gojal valley for the past one year as the government failed to drain the lake, though an attempt was made by creating a spillway.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/99303/black-day-observed-in-gilgit-hunza/>

## **Corruption rises in Pakistani Kashmir**

*January 6, 2011*

The misconduct of political elite and top government functionaries suggests that Pakistan Administered Jammu & Kashmir (PAJK), commonly known as Azad (free) Kashmir, is literally free from the burden of all rules, regulations and laws.

Surprisingly, in a rampant political and administrative corrupt regime a member of ruling political party has been disqualified over deception and misconduct. On October 29, 2010 the AJK Minister Chaudhry Rukhsar was ejected from the parliament when the Supreme Court of the semi-autonomous region, proved him guilty of submitting forged educational documents to prove his eligibility as a candidate in the election process. The MLA of the ruling Muslim Conference from southern Mirpur district had sent bogus certificates of O and A levels of British educational standards.

In AJK, a few mighty hands never feel shame of capturing any occasion to seize political and administrative powers by any means. They do not have an iota of respect to their legal, ethical or social obligations. The reason being their political survival maintained by close family ties with high-ups in civil and military bureaucracy. In the presence of ad-hoc judicial arrangements and a guarded media the accountability mechanism is hilarious. Lack of an institutional control on corruption and a political will to prosecute the violators, has turned the region into a haven for opportunists.

<http://www.groundreport.com/Business/Corruption-rises-in-Pakistani-Kashmir/2932583>

## **Wapda urged to acquire land for Bhasha Dam**

*The News, January 7, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has been urged to speed up land acquisition for the construction of Diamer-Bhasha Dam, speakers at a conference noted on January 6. Speaking at the stakeholders' seminar on "Land acquisition and resettlement of mega hydropower projects in Pakistan", the participants noted that just 45 days are left in the ground-breaking of the project and WAPDA has acquired only 150 acres land. The total area to be acquired for this purpose is around 37,419 acres.

Speakers said that the dam on completion would have 8.1MAF gross storage, while 6.4MAF storage of live water will be available for supplementing



irrigation supplies. Weighted annual value of storage has been worked out to be Rs50,824 million, while it would generate 4,500MW electricity.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=24237&Cat=3&dt=1/7/2011>

### **Resettlement plan for Bhasha affectees finalized**

*The Nation, January 7, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Wapda in consultation with stakeholders is finalising a comprehensive policy for resettlement and rehabilitation of the affectees for its future projects with the prime focus on Diamer Bhasha Dam project. Wapda Chairman, Shakil Durrani, stated this while addressing the inaugural secession of a two-day Stakeholders' Seminar on resettlement and rehabilitation of the affectees of Diamer Bhasha Dam project, at WAPDA Staff College in Islamabad on January 6.

Among a large number of notables from Diamer district of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), US Ambassador for Special Projects Robin Raphel, Asian Development Bank (ADB) Country Director, Rone Stroem, GB Health Minister Haji Gulbahar Khan, Leader of the Opposition in GB Legislative Assembly, Bashir Ahmed, ex-member GB Legislative Assembly, Syeda Fouzia Saleem Abbass, WAPDA Member (Water) Syed Raghob Abbas Shah and WAPDA Secretary Imtiaz Tajwar also attended the seminar.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Islamabad/07-Jan-2011/Resettlement-plan-for-Bhasha-affectees-finalised>

### **WAPDA to complete construction of 5 small dams in next eight months: Durrani**

*Associated Press of Pakistan, January 8, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Five small dams having power generation capacity of 225 MW would be completed during next eight months to help mitigate power shortage in the country. The projects to be completed during the period include Sattpara dam, Gomal zam and Jinnah Hydel Power projects, Chairman Pakistan Water and Power Development

Authority (WAPDA), Shakeel Durrani said while addressing the two-day seminar on 'Land Acquisition and Resettlement of Mega Hydropower Projects in Pakistan, on January 7.

The government has released Rs. 6 billion for Mangla uprising projects and payments to the affectees would start from the next month, he noted adding that it would increase the storage capacity of the dam by additional 2.8 million acre feet water by next raining season.

[http://app.com.pk/en\\_/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=126888&Itemid=2](http://app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=126888&Itemid=2)

### **Gilgit-Baltistan security: Expenditure on forces to be cut down Shabbir Mir**

*The Express Tribune, January 8, 2011*

GILGIT: Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Mehdi Shah stated on January 7 that the expenditure on the region's internal security will be cut down by 40 per cent to bring the faltering economy back on track. "In the first instance, the number of vehicles being used by the security forces will be reduced," Shah noted.

At present, Rs600 million is being spent annually on the vehicles being used by forces in Gilgit-Baltistan. Security of the region had been beefed up in light of the sectarian clashes that hit the region five years ago when more than 100 people fell to target killings in 2006. Rangers were also deputed in Gilgit to assist the police and are still in Gilgit, putting pressure on the region's budget.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/100715/gilgit-baltistan-security-expenditure-on-forces-to-be-cut-down/>

### **GB decides to hold LB elections in March**

*Business Recorder, January 10, 2011*

ASTORE: The Gilgit-Baltistan government has decided to hold local body elections in March 2011 aiming to ensure transfer of power to grassroots level, Provincial Minister, Engineer Ismail noted on January 9. He further noted for the implementation of good governance the holding of local body election was necessary and the election schedule

would be announced soon.

"Government of Gilgit-Baltistan is continuously working for the welfare of people and always trying to provide best available facilities to the citizens, he added. He said the Chief Minister and his team was continuously working day and night for development of the area and people would see the results of their efforts.

<http://www.brecorder.com/news/general-news/pakistan/1141929:news.html>

### **Shabbir Mir, Broken promises: Substandard airports hindering tourism in G-B**

*The Express Tribune, January 1, 2011*

GILGIT: Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani made a promise back in 2009 to upgrade the airports of Gilgit and Skardu and bring them at par with international standards. Fifteen months later, locals have begun to think that the promise, made prior to the general elections in October 2009, was nothing more than electioneering by PM Gilani.

Gilgit Airport is located on the edge of a slope and has a one-kilometre-long runway. The strip is too short for most mid-sized aircraft including Boeing 737s and the Airbus A320 family to take-off and land on. While Skardu Airport is comparatively larger, it also lacks the facilities of an international-level airport.

Since the grounding of Fokker aircraft in 2006, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) operates two daily flights using French-Italian ATR 42 turboprop aircraft between Gilgit and Islamabad. Each flight can accommodate around 40 passengers. C-130 aircraft are also employed by PIA to make sorties to this mountainous region.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/102067/broken-promises-substandard-airports-hindering-tourism-in-g-b/>

### **Federalization of Chitral- Gilgit Road**

*January 12, 2011*

The federal Minister for Communications, Dr. Arbab Alamgir has disclosed that the Government

of Gilgit-Baltistan and KP have requested to the federal government to involve the National Highway Authority of Pakistan to construct the important strategic road between Gilgit and Chitral.

The Federal Minister, while talking to the members of National Highway Commission in a meeting convened on January 19 at Islamabad told that the KP government and the government of Gilgit-Baltistan have requested the NHA to construct the Road between the two districts Chitral and Gilgit.

“Due to the natural disasters and land sliding, the Gilgit-Baltistan is most of the times landlocked. Same is the situation for Chitral in winter. This alternate road by National Highway Authority would ease that tension and provide alternate routes for the two regions.” The federal Minister said.

<http://www.dardistantimes.com/content/federalization33-chitral4-gilgit-road1>

### **PPP is legacy of martyrs, says GB CM**

*The News, January 12, 2011*

GILGIT-Baltistan Chief Minister Syed Mehdi Shah stated the PPP is the legacy of martyrs and no one can eliminate it from the political scene. He noted this while addressing a reception hosted in his honour by PPP Punjab former General Secretary, Ghulam Abbas on January 11. PPP central leader Syeda Abida Hussain, MNA Shakeela Rasheed and other party members were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Mehdi Shah stated, “The tragic killing of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer was a severe blow to the PPP but our history showed that sacrifices had further strengthened the party.” He said PPP stalwarts knew how to fight against dictatorship as they didn't believe in making compromises or deals with usurpers. He added, “Our Shaheed leaders, including Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto, also struggle hard against dictators and always voiced for the rule of democracy.”

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=25189&Cat=5&dt=1/12/2011>

## **Kashmir: Former AJK PM calls on Minister for Kashmir affairs**

*January 13, 2011*

Former Prime Minister AJK, Barrister Sultan Mahmood called on Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan, Mian Manzoor Ahmad Wattoo in Islamabad on January 11. Both discussed matters of mutual interest. They also discussed the development schemes in AJK, ADP of current AJK budget and other matters of national importance.

Meanwhile, Health minister GB, Ghulbar Khan, Haji Janbaz Khan MLA, Bashir Ahmad Khan MLA and the leader of GB Assembly opposition, Maulana Sarwar Shah also met the Federal Minister. The delegation impressed upon the federal minister that funds may be provided for Cadet College Chilas, DHQ hospital and for the help of flood affectees. The federal minister directed the Chief Secretary GB that these projects of national importance may be implemented on priority basis.

[http://www.tradingmarkets.com/news/stock-alert/aeopf\\_kashmir-former-ajk-pm-calls-on-minister-for-kashmir-affairs-1420328.html](http://www.tradingmarkets.com/news/stock-alert/aeopf_kashmir-former-ajk-pm-calls-on-minister-for-kashmir-affairs-1420328.html)

## **Pak babu dismissed two AJK tax officials**

*The Nation, January 13, 2011*

A powerful babu in Pakistan's government machinery dismissed two senior AJK tax officials on frivolous charges in an alleged case of personal victimization. Former acting additional commissioners AJK Tax Department Basil Siddique and Shazia Habib had earned the wrath of their boss who believed that both the officers were instrumental in staging protests against the commissioner income tax AJK Qaiser Iqbal, in 2010. Frivolous charges were levelled against them and eventually former Secretary Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, Ihtisham Khan dismissed the officers from job on January 4, 2011. Manzoor Ahmad Wattoo, Federal Minister for KA&GB reiterated that the rule of merit would prevail and he would ensure that the officers were not victimised.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Islamabad/13-Jan-2011/Pak-babu->

dismissed-two-AJK-tax-officials

## **AJK President meets Chairman ERRA**

*Business Recorder, January 15, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Raja Zulqurnain Khan met Deputy Chairman ERRA Lieutenant General Haroon Aslam in Islamabad on January 14 and discussed the progress of on-going projects in Kashmir.

President AJK said that no one can deny the fact that ERRA's role has been pivotal in rebuilding the destroyed facilities and forthcoming approach of current administration and political will of Pakistani government to stand by people of AJK has turned this adversity into opportunity.

Later, the Ambassador of Italian Republic Vincenzo Prati handed over the office building comprising of five rooms to DRU Bagh after successful completion of projects. Italian Embassy has been an active partner with ERRA. Lieutenant General Haroon Aslam paid rich tribute to the Ambassador and Government of Italy for standing by the side of Pakistani people in time of need. Italy has been one of the strong partners of ERRA and what the ERRA has achieved today speaks of its partner's commitment and support, he added.

<http://www.brecorder.com/news/general-news/pakistan/1143856:news.html>

## **Differences between PPP, AJK govt. mount**

*January 16, 2011*

MUZAFFARABAD: The differences between Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Azad Kashmir government intensified as Prime Minister Sardar Ataiq hinted at holding elections of Kashmir Council in February. Under an agreement between PPP and AJK government, the elections on four seats of Kashmir Council will be held after general elections. However, after the decision of two former premiers, Sardar Yaqoob and Barrister Sultan Mahmud, to join the PPP, Sardar Atiq hinted at Kashmir Council poll in February.

According to sources, if elections of the Kashmir

Council are held before February 7, PPP will manage to secure only one seat. In addition, two sides have also developed serious differences on dates of holding general elections.

[http://www.samaa.tv/News30121-Differences\\_between\\_PPP\\_AJK\\_govt\\_mount.aspx](http://www.samaa.tv/News30121-Differences_between_PPP_AJK_govt_mount.aspx)

### **Shabbir Mir, Politicising development: 'G-B admin holding up highway expansion**

*The Express Tribune, January 16, 2011*

GILGIT: The Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) finance minister accused the Gilgit-Baltistan administration of attempting to subvert the up-gradation of Karakoram Highway (KKH), by delaying payments to those affected by the project. "The delay is being done deliberately by the Gilgit and Hunza-Nagar administrations so that people become violent and create law and order issues for the government," G-B Finance Minister Mohammad Ali Akhtar noted on January 15.

"If it is not their intent, why are they doing this?" he said, saying that the government was using delaying tactics for the past three years. Around 8,000 people, whose land and other property was damaged or acquired by the government for expanding the KKH, have not been compensated for more than three years.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/104494/politicising-development-g-b-admin-holding-up-highway-expansion/>

### **Gunmen injure PML-N leader in Gilgit**

*January 17, 2011*

GILGIT: Gunmen shot dead one person and injured three others, including a local office bearer of Pakistan Muslim League-N, in scenic Gilgit valley last night. According to reports, PML-N leader Jafarullah Khan was passing by on Ponyal Road when unknown gunmen intercepted his vehicle and opened fire. The attack left Khan and three passersby seriously wounded. They were shifted to District Headquarter Hospital, but one of them succumbed to his wounds. According to media reports, market and shops were immediately closed

down after the attack, giving the city a deserted look.

[http://www.samaa.tv/News30195-Gunmen\\_injure\\_PMLN\\_leader\\_in\\_Gilgit.aspx](http://www.samaa.tv/News30195-Gunmen_injure_PMLN_leader_in_Gilgit.aspx)

### **ERRA steering committee awards AJK University Rawalakot Campus reconstruction work**

*Associated Press of Pakistan, January 17, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: The project Steering Committee awarded the reconstruction of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) University Rawalakot Campus work to Builders-KGC Company. The steering committee comprising of Deputy Chairman ERRA, Lt Gen Haroon Aslam, Vice Chancellor AJK University, Director General State Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (SERRA) and Chief Engineer AJK.

Out of 11 companies who tendered for the projects, five companies were short listed, whereas, Builders-KGC Company being the lowest bidder was awarded the contract as per rules and regulation. The project has a covered area of more than 4,72,000 square feet, and will provide residential and academic blocks.

[http://app.com.pk/en/\\_index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=127751&Itemid=2](http://app.com.pk/en/_index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=127751&Itemid=2)

### **Wattoo hints at dissolution of AJK LA**

*January 18, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Mian Manzoor Ahmad Wattoo said that Kalabagh Dam fell prey to the country's politics and it could be constructed if all the stakeholders and political parties were on board. He shared views on political issues pertaining to Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, during a detailed conversation at his residence on January 18. "I'm in favour of the construction of Kalabagh Dam and I think it should be constructed if all the stakeholders are on the same page. The national unity should not be compromised, however," he said adding that the

KBD could prove vital for overcoming energy shortage but it became a victim of politics.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/19-Jan-2011/Wattoo-hints-at-dissolution-of-AJK-LA>

### **GB govt failed to restore peace: PML-N**

*The News, January 18, 2011*

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Gilgit-Baltistan Council coordinator, Siddiqui Farooq stated on January 17 that recent target killings were a proof that the GB government had failed to restore peace and perform its constitutional duty of protecting citizens. Addressing a press conference, he noted Gilgit-Baltistan was highly sensitive region because it was located in close proximity with China, India and Central Asia where Frontier Constabulary, Gilgit Scouts and intelligence agencies had their presence, besides police and occasional watch by the Pakistan Army.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=3391&Cat=13&dt=1/18/2011>

### **AJK govt plans new industrial zone**

*The Nation, January 28, 2011*

MIRPUR: AJK government was seriously contemplating to set up a new mega industrial zone over an area of 26,000 kanals of land in Mirpur in near future, official sources stated. The new industrial zone, the sources noted on January 27, was proposed to be constructed near Moori village, on Mirpur-Jatlan road, for which the required land was being acquired by the government.

Sources further stated that the state government was giving due attention on promoting business and industrial activities in AJK where a conducive atmosphere was already available. The state government had also intended to give due facilities to the existing and intending entrepreneurs at par with Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces to ensure speedy uplift of the industrial sector of the liberated territory, they added.

<http://nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Business/28-Jan-2011/AJK-govt-plans-new-industrial-zone>

### **Attabad Lake: Spillway re-opened, outflow 22,000 cusecs**

*The Express Tribune, January 28, 2011*

The spillway was reopened on January 27 on recommendation of American, Chinese and Nespak experts, noted a press release. The water flow into the Hunza River after the spillway was opened is about 22,000 cusecs. As a preventive measure, the government of Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B), on directives of National Disaster Management Authority, has vacated the low lying areas downstream till the water flow stabilises.

Currently water-level in the lake is lowering at about seven inches per hour. The G-B government has also imposed Section 144 along the river banks to restrict movement. If things go according to Frontier Works Organisation plan, the water level in the lake will be lowered by an additional 30 metres by May 2011 and the 15 kilometres of the Karakoram Highway currently under water will re-emerge.

The lake was formed last year on January 4 during a landslide that completely buried Attabad village and killed 20 people. About 6,000 people were displaced and a further 25,000 were stranded in the upstream villages.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/110195/attabad-lake-spillway-re-opened-outflow-22000-cusecs/>

### **Pakistan stands firm behind Kashmiris struggle: Wattoo**

*Associated Press of Pakistan, January 29, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Manzoor Wattoo stated on January 28 that all preparations have been finalized to observe Kashmir Solidarity Day on February 5 in a befitting manner. "We reiterate our commitment to extend full support to the Kashmiri brethren in their freedom struggle from Indian occupation," the minister noted. The minister said that Pakistan would continue supporting the people of Kashmir.

[http://app.com.pk/en\\_/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=129156&Itemid=2](http://app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=129156&Itemid=2)

## **Shabbir Mir, Lawmakers pass resolution against acts of terrorism**

*The Express Tribune, January 29, 2011*

GILGIT: The Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly passed a unanimous resolution on January 28, condemning the recent blasts in girls schools in Diamer district and targeted killings in Gilgit that have stoked sectarian unrest in the region. They also demanded the arrest of those behind such acts. The resolution was passed during the first proceedings of the legislative assembly's 10th session with Speaker Wazir Baig in chair. Janbaz Khan, a PML-N lawmaker hailing from Diamer district, tabled the resolution that was supported by almost all the members. "It's the responsibility of the government to take such outlaws to task," noted the lawmaker.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/110846/lawmakers-pass-resolution-against-acts-of-terrorism/>

## **Gilgit Baltistan: National Commission on Human Rights to Include Delegates from Minority Groups**

*January 29, 2011*

Gilgit Baltistan, although not formally a part of Pakistan, will be represented in the National Commission on Human Rights that will be supposed to act on reports of human rights violations and work to improve existing legislation. The government is set to establish an independent National Commission on Human Rights for the protection of human rights in the country.

Chairman National Assembly Standing Committee on Human Rights Riaz Fatiana on January 27 presented in the National Assembly the committee's

report for the formation of the National Commission on Human Rights. It is expected that the bill for the formation of the independent National Commission on Human Rights will be presented in the current session of the National Assembly.

The proposed bill for the formation of the National Commission on Human Rights stated that the federal government shall constitute a commission to be known as the National Commission on Human Rights and it will have a member from each province, the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas, Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad Capital Territory and two members from the minorities community having knowledge and background of human rights.

<http://www.unpo.org/article/12186>

## **Pir Karam Ali Shah to be sworn in as Governor GB today**

*January 30, 2011*

GILGIT: Pir Karam Ali Shah was sworn in as new Governor of Gilgit Baltistan on January 29. According to reports, Chief Judge of Appellate Court Gilgit Baltistan Justice Muhammad Nawaz Abbasi would administer the oath of the new Governor. Speaker and Deputy Speaker of National Assembly have congratulated Pir Karam Ali for his appointment as a Governor. Pir Syed Karam Ali Shah is a veteran politician who was first elected unopposed as member of the Northern Area Advisory Council in 1970.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=174403>

# Economic Developments

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## **Currency changers demand stringent security**

*Pakistan Observer, January 5, 2011*

MIRPUR: Local currency exchange dealers have called for a stringent action against the gangs of way-laiders, fraudulent and cheaters involved in fleecing people. A representative of Mirpur Money Changers said fool proof security system was urgently required for the safety of life and property of exchange dealers as well as the visitors of the money changing agencies. He said it was a matter of grave concern not only for the general public but also for those running the business of money exchange.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=69808>

## **Inflation woes: Oil price bomb drops on G-B**

*The Express Tribune, January 2, 2011*

GILGIT: The price increase in petroleum products on the eve of the New Year has dealt a crushing blow to the already limited financial resources of the cash starved people of Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B).

“What will be the fate of people like us under such conditions,” asked Jehangir Khan, a government schoolteacher who draws around Rs15,000 per month said of the untamed price hike that has impacted the country for the past couple of years. “The 'peoples' government has ventured on a path that leads simply to the destruction of the poor, not poverty,” he noted, adding that the 'drama' of increasing government employees' salaries last year was a tool employed by the government to keep them silent in the face of skyrocketing inflation.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/98004/inflation-woes-oil-price-bomb-drops-on-g-b/>

# International Developments

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## **Portfolio of projects assisted by France reviewed**

*Daily Times, January 14, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance and Economic Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar chaired a portfolio review of projects assisted by France in Economic Affairs Division (EAD) on January 13. The meeting was attended by French Ambassador Daniel Jouanneau, French Development Agency (AFD) Head of Asia Department Ms Martha Stein-Sochas and Pakistani officials representing EAD, WAPDA, provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Khar appreciated the French financial assistance for execution of different development projects in Pakistan and hoped for continued and enhanced assistance in future. She appreciated the fulfillment of Tokyo pledge by committing assistance of 150 million euros against total commitment of 300 million euros.

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011\01\14\story\\_14-1-2011\\_pg5\\_14](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011\01\14\story_14-1-2011_pg5_14)

## **US to provide \$66 mn for Pakistan dam projects**

*January 8, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: The US on January 6 announced it would provide USD 66 million to Pakistan to complete two dam projects as part of its commitment to help meet the country's energy needs. Acting Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Frank Ruggiero signed two agreements with Pakistani officials to provide the funding for the Gomal Zam dam in South Waziristan tribal region and Satpara dam at Skardu in Gilgit-Baltistan. The dams will provide over 35 MW of power to nearly 55,000 households.

<http://www.zeenews.com/news679188.html>

## **Gilgit Baltistan: Controversial US Support for Dams**

*January 1, 2011*

Despite Gilgit Baltistan's unresolved international

status, the US is supporting dam construction in the region to meet Pakistan's energy needs, which will displace local residents and destroy ancient rock carvings. The US on 6 January 2011 announced it would provide USD 66 million to Pakistan to complete two dam projects as part of its commitment to help meet the country's energy needs. Acting Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Frank Ruggiero signed two agreements with Pakistani officials to provide the funding for the Gomal Zam dam in South Waziristan tribal region and Satpara dam at Skardu in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The dams will provide over 35 MW of power to nearly 55,000 households. "Last year's devastating floods demonstrated the need for flood control infrastructure. These two multipurpose dams will control flood waters, provide electricity and store water for irrigation and household use for downstream villages," Ruggiero stated.

The US government stated it is committed to a long-term partnership with Pakistan and will continue to support projects that benefit the people and bring economic development to "critical areas of the country".

<http://www.unpo.org/article/12116>

## **Reinforcing education in G-B**

*The Express Tribune, January 27, 2011*

GILGIT: Australia and the Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) government have joined hands to provide quality education to people in the north. "An agreement to this effect has been signed with the Australian government," G-B Education Minister Dr Ali Madad Sher said on January 25. Under the agreement 14 model schools, two each in every district of the mountain region will be constructed with assistance of the Australian government, Dr Sher noted.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/109676/reinforcing-education-in-g-b/>



## **Taxation policy for Gilgit-Baltistan in the offing**

*Business Recorder, January 22, 2011*

GILGIT: The Gilgit-Baltistan Council formed a committee for carving out a comprehensive and viable taxation policy. Member Gilgit-Baltistan Council, Amjad Hussain Advocate who is also the chairman of the select committee on Public

Accounts noted that next meeting is being called shortly to work out the task and reach a friendly policy so that it could be implemented in this area for speedy progress and development of the region.

<http://www.brecorder.com/news/taxation/pakistan/1146210:news.html>

# Other Developments

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## **Shabbir Mir, Staying warm: A luxury in Gilgit-Baltistan**

*The Express Tribune, January 3, 2011*

GILGIT: Already suffering from power outages and fuel shortage, the people of Gilgit-Baltistan must now contend with the disappearance of firewood from markets during the harsh winter.

“We cannot afford to buy kerosene oil and gas for heating purposes as the prices are simply beyond our means,” said senior citizen Munir Akhtar on January 2 as he failed to find firewood to keep his family warm. He said at some places Rs600 was being charged for 40 kgs which he said was beyond his budget. LPG gas was available at Rs180 per kg in Gilgit, compelling ordinary people to stay away from purchasing it. Along with the skyrocketing prices of petroleum products, Kerosene has remained in short supply for most of the winter. The availability of electricity is also limited and people have to brave more than 19 hours of load shedding a day.

Most of the depots and wood stalls in Gilgit ran out of wood in December and remained so till January 2 as consumption increased with the cold weather. The government also didn't allow transportation of wood from Chilas to Gilgit and other parts in an attempt to discourage illegal logging.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/98307/staying-warm-a-luxury-in-gilgit-baltistan/>

## **Roshan Mughal, University in AJK: Court intervenes to rectify bidding anomalies**

*The Express Tribune, January 2, 2011*

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) High Court directed the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (Erra) to award a Rs5.47 billion contract to build the King Abdullah University to the lowest bidder.

The single-member bench, comprising Chief

Justice Musfata Mughal, gave this ruling on a writ petition filed by a Karachi-based construction company, Paragon (Pvt) Limited, against the cancellation of their contract by Erra without assigning 'any genuine reasons'. The company had offered the lowest bid in the tender process.

In its detailed judgment, the court rejected arguments of respondents, including the Azad Kashmir government and the project director of the Saudi fund, and directed them to complete the university within a specific time so that the donated money can be utilised and not returned to the donor.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/98037/university-in-ajk-court-intervenes-to-rectify-bidding-anomalies/>

## **Shabbir Mir, Attabad landslide lake: One year on, the threat is still looming**

*The Express Tribune, January 4, 2011*

GILGIT: The emergency created by a massive landslide that struck Hunza's Attabad village on January 4 last year refuses to subside. Thousands living up and down the 23-kilometre-long lake are still under threat from the lake that was created by the landslide. Many people in Gilgit-Baltistan believe that the Attabad Lake disaster is the biggest-ever calamity to have hit the region. “It is such a big disaster that even the region's history is silent about it [in shock],” stated Farman Karim, who lost four family members in the disaster.

At least 20 people died in the landslide that blocked the Hunza River, creating a lake that gradually expanded 23 kilometres upstream, submerging four villages Ainabad, Shishkat, Gulmit and Gulkin. The landslide also blocked the Karakoram Highway (KKH), a vital trade link to China, cutting off 26,000 people in Upper Hunza Valley, also known as Gojal Valley. The debris obstructed nearly three kilometres of the once fast-flowing river and a longer stretch of the highway.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/98849/attabad-landslide-lake-one-year-on-the-threat-is-still-looming/>

## **Shabbir Mir, Environmental problems: Bad air causing eye infections in Gilgit**

*The Express Tribune, January 6, 2011*

GILGIT: Air pollution in Gilgit has increased to such an extent that local people are experiencing eye irritation in open places after sunset. From a higher altitude, a thick cover of smoke can be seen enveloping the entire town after sunset which remains suspended over it till dawn. It recedes only after sun is high on the horizon. This continues throughout winter, with pollution increasing with each passing year.

"I usually go out at night. I experience so much irritation that my eyes become watery," stated Tufail Khan, who lives in Kashrote. He, however, does not experience any irritation when he is inside his room. Khan is not alone: most of the people in Kashrote and adjacent villages have similar complaints.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/99785/environmental-problems-bad-air-causing-eye-infections-in-gilgit/>

## **960 megawatts more power from Tarbela in four years: Wapda chairman**

*Business Recorder, January 9, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) Shakil Durrani stated that additional power of 960 mw will be generated from Tarbela under new extension plan. He noted that an estimated \$700 million would be spent on the project for which the World Bank was supporting the government of Pakistan.

He stated, "Engineering consultants have reached Pakistan for the fourth Tarbela extension project which will be completed in four years". After completion of the project, 960 mw additional electricity would be generated from the reservoir, whose existing power generation capacity is 3,400 mw. He said, "Development work is also underway on 969 mw Neelum-Jhelum project, which will be completed in seven years". He said that 10 km tunnel had been constructed at the project site.

He said the United States had signed two

agreements with Pakistan to provide \$66 million for completion of Gomal Zam and Satpara dam projects. Shakil said these dams would provide over 35 megawatts power to nearly 55,000 households in South Waziristan and Skardu, and would be helpful to meet the country's energy needs.

<http://www.brecorder.com/news/fuel-and-energy/pakistan/1141709:news.html>

## **PM awards Rs. 300,000 cheque to caretaker of Chinese graveyard**

*Pakistan Times, January 9, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani awarded a cheque of Rs. 300,000 to Manzoor Hussain, caretaker of the Chinese graveyard in Danyore, Gilgit-Baltistan, at the PM House on January 9. The Prime Minister announced this reward for Mr. Manzoor Hussain in presence of the Chinese Premier during the handing over ceremony of Pak-China Center on December 18, 2010.

Gilani lauded Manzoor Hussain for his perseverance and enthusiasm in taking care of the graves of the Chinese who joined their Pakistani brethren in the construction of the historic Karakorum Highway. Manzoor Hussain thanked the Prime Minister.

<http://www.pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=17965>

## **17 hydropower projects to be functional by 2017**

*Pakistan Observer, January 10, 2011*

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government lifted certain restrictions on establishing electricity projects of over 50 mw, which will pave the way for setting up 17 hydropower projects in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Kyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Punjab provinces. All these projects would be functional by the end of 2017. Sources in the Planning Commission stated that all bottlenecks had been removed which had halted the construction progress of 5107 mw capacity hydropower projects. These will provide cheap electricity and help bridge the power deficit the country has been facing in the shape of load shedding.

Out of total, nine hydropower projects would be

located in Azad Jammu and Kashmir with installed capacity of 2154 mw. Each project has different completion date. New Bong Escape Hydropower Project near Mangla has 84 mw capacity and would be completed by the end of 2013. Other projects include Kotli (100 mw), Gulpur (100 mw), Rajdhani (132 mw), Sehra (130 mw), and Patrind (147 mw). Construction work would be completed in 2014. Two projects, Chakothe-Hattian (139 mw) and Azad Patan (222 mw) would start functioning in 2016. The completion date of Kohala hydropower project (1100 mw) is 2017. The cost of these projects would be recovered within five years.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=70576>

### **Ashraf vows to add more electricity to national grid**

*The News, January 12, 2011*

Minister for Water and Power Raja Pervez Ashraf stated on January 10 that eight private power projects of 1,611MW have been commissioned within the past couple of years, and another 800MW would be added into the national grid by private sector this year out of which some projects are already under test runs.

He stated this while chairing 86th meeting of the Board of Private Power and Infrastructure Board. The meeting was attended by Secretary Water and Power Javed Iqbal, Secretary Planning Commission Sohail Ahmad, Chief Secretary AJK Mohammad Shahzad Arbab, member FBR Abrar Ahmad, Joint Secretary Ministry of Finance Shabbir Ahmed, Managing Director PPIB N A Zuberi, Secretary Energy/Power Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sohail Altaf, MD SHYDO Syed Ishtiaq Hussain Shah besides other senior government officials.

Ashraf advised the Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) to hold a national debate through a

seminar of national and international experts, politicians, academia and subject specialists from all walks of life for seeking an out of the box solution to the energy issues being faced by the country.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=25070&Cat=2&dt=1/11/2011>

### **2 girl schools blown up in Chilas**

*The News, January 16, 2011*

GILGIT: At least two girls' schools were blown up in Chilas valley in a predawn attempt on January 15 while outside wall of a mosque was partially damaged, officials stated. "The incident occurred at around 2:00am," noted an administration official. He stated that no loss of life was reported in the blast that triggered a sharp reaction from the people who termed it a conspiracy against the Diامر-Bhasha Dam and other development projects.

"Three rooms of the government Girls High School Chilas and two rooms of Social Action Programme [SAP] School were damaged in two separate blasts," he noted, adding that the boundary wall of a mosque was also partially damaged as the third blast occurred.

The official stated that investigations were on but no arrests had been made so far. Meanwhile, a delegation from Diامر comprising clerics denounced the blasts and termed it a conspiracy to label the people of Diامر district as hard core who are against the female education. "But we want to make it clear that we have nothing to do with such sabotaging activities," they noted, adding that they are not against female education and NGOs in their area.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=25947&Cat=7&dt=1/16/2011>

# Fact sheet on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

Total area of Jammu and Kashmir	222,236 sq kms
Area of under illegal Pakistani occupation (PoK = AJK + Gilgit Baltistan)	78114 sq kilometres
Area of J&K under Chinese occupation <i>Area ceded to China by Pakistan</i>	42,685 sq kms 5,130 sq kms
Together Pak-China	120,799 sq kms
Area with India	101437 sq kms

**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:** 5180 sq. kilometres (Area of Shaksgam Valley)

(Source: Jammu & Kashmir Government website at <http://www.jammukashmir.nic.in/>, accessed on November 14,, 010)

## Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)

**Area:** 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, Hattian

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

**President:** Raja Zulqarnain Khan

**Prime Minister:** Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan

**AJK Council:** Total 12 members

**AJK Legislative Assembly:** Total seats are 49

**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 Parties and 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)

(Source: Azad Jammu & Kashmir Government website at <http://www. www.ajk.gov.pk/>, accessed on November 14, 2010)

## Gilgit-Baltistan

**Area:** 72,496 sq. kilometers

**Population:** 870,347 (1998 population census)

**Capital:** Gilgit

**Districts:** Seven

**Baltistan** Region (part of Ladakh) is divided into Ghanche 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

**Gilgit-Baltistan Council:** Total 15 members

**Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Council:** 24 members directly elected

**Governor of G-B:** Wazir Baig (officiating)

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

**Political Parties and 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)

(Sources: Jammu & Kashmir Government website at <http://www.gilgitbaltistan.gov.pk>, & website of the Balwaristan National Front, <http://www.balawaristan.net>, accessed on November 14, 2010)

**Disclaimer**

*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.*

# POK NEWS DIGEST



***Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses***

No. 1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg  
New Delhi-110 010

Telephone: 91-11-26717983; Fax: 91-11-26154191  
Website: [www.idsa.in](http://www.idsa.in); Email: [lbscidsa@gmail.com](mailto:lbscidsa@gmail.com)