

POK

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News Digest

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MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Jammu & Kashmir

(Source: GIS Section MP-IDSA)

In this Edition

This monthly digest contains the increasing threat of Corona virus contamination as pilgrims return from Iran. The government took the help of the Army to enforce a total lockdown to reduce the case load. Tourism was banned to help the region to tide over the pandemic. The Gilgit and Baltistan (GB) government was apprehensive that complete lockdown will affect the CPEC project. The AJK government is hopeful that CPEC will bring prosperity to the region. OIC's special envoy visited the Line of Control to assess development there post the August 5 decision of the Indian government to abolish the special status of Jammu and Kashmir which was granted under article 370. There are reports that people in GB do not have land rights and government is trying to introduce Land Reform to address this longstanding grievances. People in GB also lament that they are made part of Kashmir dispute and yet the state subject law was abolished in 1974 which later led to riot and conflict. GB asked the federal government not to tamper with the 2018 governance order.

Coordinator, PoK Project

Political Developments

OIC's special envoy to visit AJK, LoC

The News, March 3, 2020

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) secretary general's special envoy for Jammu and Kashmir, Ambassador Yousef M Al Dobeay, leading a six-member delegation, is visiting Pakistan and 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)' from March 2 to 6. The delegation will also visit the Line of Control (LoC) to get first-hand knowledge about the loss of lives and properties caused by indiscriminate firing of the Indian forces. During the visit, the delegation will be briefed on the deteriorating human rights situation in 'Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K)', the Foreign Office said in a statement on March 2. According to the statement, the special envoy's visit is of particular significance in the backdrop of India's unilateral and illegal actions of August 5 last year and a strong message on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is contained in the resolutions and communiqués of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) and summit meetings. The OIC has extended its steadfast support to the Kashmiri people in their just struggle for their inalienable right to self-determination. The organisation has a dedicated Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir since 1994. Since August 5, 2019, the OIC has remained active in highlighting the deteriorating situation in 'IOJ&K'.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/623021-oic-s-special-envoy-to-visit-ajk-loc>

Fate of Kashmiris to be decided though democratic way: Masood Khan

Associated Press, March 4, 2020

President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Masood Khan on March 4 said that the fate of Kashmiris would be decided only through democratic way. In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, he said

“We have to seek support of civil society in the United States in the wake of current scenario, in which US is not targeting Indian Prime Minister Narindra Modi for committing human right violations in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&JK).” He said that Modi's fascist government was not only targeting the Kashmiris and other Muslims in India, but he is following the foot prints of Hitler, Mussolini and Malsovic. In the strategic history of the world even during Second World War, there is no other such example.” India has converged its 900,000 troops in a small territory of IOJ&K. President Masood Khan said the poor people all across India were questioning the attitude of Indian government toward minorities, he added. All the western media including CNN and Reuters criticized US President over his statement that Narendra Modi is promoting religious tolerance in India, he said.

<https://www.app.com.pk/fate-of-kashmiris-to-be-decided-though-democratic-way-masood-khan/>

Khateeb meets Kashmiri refugees in Mirpur

Kashmir Media Service, March 5, 2020

The General Secretary of All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK), Muhammad Hussain Khateeb along with media in charge, Ali Hassan Naqvi visited Mirpur and met the representatives of Kashmiri refugees. Muhammad Hussain Khateeb also chaired a meeting of the refugees from occupied Kashmir in Mirpur where the current situation of the territory and the role of Jammu region was discussed. Muhammad Hussain Khateeb on the occasion apprised the participants of the current situation in occupied Kashmir and chalked out a strategy to address concerns of the Kashmiri people. He also assured them of their full support. Refugee leaders, Muhammad Riaz Jarral, Shabbir Ahmed Chichi, Mirza Zafar Iqbal, Thekadar Mohammad Shafi, Raja Zahid, Chaudhry Asif, Mohib

Jaraal and Khurshid Thakur participated in the meeting.

<https://kmsnews.org/news/2020/03/05/khateeb-chairs-kashmiri-refugees-meeting-in-mirpur/>

OIC demands India to revoke 5th August steps in held Jammu & Kashmir

The Nation, March 6, 2020

The Special Representative of the OIC Secretary General on Kashmir, Yousaf Al Dobeay has demanded of the Indian government to revoke 5th August steps in the occupied Kashmir, lift curfew and the siege and restore fundamental human rights of the Kashmiris. Talking to news men in Muzaffarabad after meeting AJK President Sardar Masood Khan, he said the OIC has always advocated to resolve this longstanding issue in line with UN Security Council's resolutions and peaceful political settlement to ensure durable peace in South Asia. He also demanded implementation of the recommendations of the UN Human Right Council's reports 2018 and 2019 and resolve the humanitarian issues in the occupied Kashmir. Speaking on the occasion, President AJK Sardar Masood Khan thanked OIC Secretary General for deputing a special representative to visit the Line of Control and observe the situation.

<https://nation.com.pk/06-Mar-2020/oic-demands-india-to-revoke-5th-august-steps-in-held-jammu-kashmir>

Worsening human rights in PoK, Gilgit Baltistan raised at UN

ANI, March 7, 2020

Political activists from Gilgit Baltistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) have raised the worsening human rights situation in the region during the 43rd session of United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on March 6. Senge H Sering, President of Gilgit Baltistan Studies told the Council during his intervention, "The people of Pakistan-occupied-Gilgit-Baltistan continue to face torture, sedition and terrorism charges and face life-imprisonment for

opposing onslaught on their resources and cultural identity. Locals are losing battle against worst demographic engineering due to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor that encourages illegal settlements of Pakistanis and Chinese" he added, "China-led genocide is enabling fast depletion of flora and fauna with impending environmental catastrophe. Further, a permanent ban on resource-use on locals is enabling Chinese companies to enjoy an advantage to exploit indigenous mineral wealth". Senge said that people of Gilgit Baltistan who are constitutionally citizens of India and are part of the Union Territory of Ladakh are under constant threat of terrorism perpetrated by the Pakistani military. He said, "Locals trying to protect natural resources in a peaceful manner are threatened with abductions, genocide and economic blockade as happened recently when pro-Taliban Pakistani citizens called for the massacre of Shias and Ismailies of Gilgit Baltistan travelling through their districts".

<https://www.bignewsnetwork.com/news/264231296/worsening-human-rights-in-pok-gilgit-baltistan-raised-at-un>

AJK okays allowance for Indian LoC firing victims

The News, March 12, 2020

Azad Jammu and Kashmir cabinet on March 11 approved monthly "Guzzara Allowance" (compensatory allowance) for the families of the martyrs of unprovoked Indian firing at the Line of Control (LoC). Under the AJK Cease Fire Line Incidents Relief (Amendment) Act, 1992, each member of the family will get Rs 2,000 per month. Under the Act, 755 individuals belonging to 171 families from 2016 to till date would benefit from this package. The government will bear Rs 20 million in this regard. Besides, the affected families are also included in BISP Ehsas Programme in addition to being provided Rs 100,000 lump-sum compensatory grant. The cabinet meeting, presided over by Prime Minister Farooq Haider Khan, also approved AJK Human Rights Commission Act 2020. The commission having judicial powers will prepare report about the human rights issues and victims of

torture and aggression. The cabinet also approved amendments in AJK Election Commission Act 1970, Electoral and Delimitation Act 1970 and Political Parties Act 1987. Addressing the cabinet, Haider Khan said his government would take all possible care for the families of the LoC martyrs as it is the responsibility of the state, adding: “The valiant people living along the LoC are standing shoulder to shoulder with their brave armed forces to foil the nefarious designs of the enemy”.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/627846-ajk-okays-allowance-for-indian-loc-firing-victims>

Govt asked to declare GB people ‘constitutional citizens’

The Dawn, March 13, 2020

On March 12, the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly passed a unanimous resolution demanding that the federal government declare the people of the region as constitutional citizens of the country. The members of opposition and treasury bench said that the issuance of any other order to govern the region would not be accepted. They demanded that the government declare the region as part of the country constitutionally or grant them autonomy under the United Nations resolutions. The special session of the Assembly was held in the new hall in Gilgit on March 12 with Speaker Fida Nashad in the chair. PPP member Javed Hussain tabled a resolution, saying people of Gilgit-Baltistan got liberation from Dogra Raj and joined Pakistan. “Now people of the region are citizens of Pakistan, therefore, they should be declared constitutional citizens of the country,” he added. He said that the federal government is to promulgate Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2020 to govern the region. “It is injustice to the GB people to be governed through orders,” he said. Mr Hussain said that GB people should be given the status of full citizens of the country or they should be given all rights as residents of a disputed territory under United Nations resolutions on the issue. Minister Dr Iqbal said that for the last 72 years, demands of GB people could not be met. “It is violation of human rights as people living in Pakistan for seven decades are not given

the right of vote to choose members of parliament,” he added.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1540567/govt-asked-to-declare-gb-people-constitutional-citizens>

Tariq Naqash, AJK govt accused of taking coronavirus threat lightly

Dawn, March 16, 2020

Authorities in “Azad” Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) said on March 15 that so far none of the nine suspected cases have tested positive but nevertheless they were on alert to deal with the threat of Covid 19. However, an association of young doctors and civil society activists mocked official claims and accused the government of taking the situation in a “carefree manner.” Dr Syed Nadeemur Rehman, AJK’s focal person for COVID-19, told reporters that out of the nine suspected cases, six had reported at Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences Muzaffarabad and three at Divisional Headquarters Hospital Mirpur. Their samples were sent to NIH Islamabad for screening from where four reports had been received with negative results, he said. The remaining [five] reports would be received on March 16, he added. However, statistics shared at a briefing in Islamabad showed that 11 samples from AJK had been tested at NIH and all were negative. On March 13, the AJK government decided to impose a health emergency in the state. Following the decisions of the National Security Committee, the AJK government also closed educational institutions besides banning all festivals and large-scale wedding parties.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1541261>

Shabbir Mir, G-B govt imposes Section 144 to ban gatherings as coronavirus cases rise

The Express Tribune, March 21, 2020

The Gilgit-Baltistan government on March 21 took drastic measures and imposed Section 144 as the total number of confirmed cases in Pakistan crosses 500. The decision was made by province’s chief minister, said the Secretariat’s Sajjadul Haq. “Section 144 is

effective from today onwards to discourage gathering of people,” he said, adding that arrangements would be personally supervised by G-B Chief Minister, Hafeezur Rehman. The number of coronavirus cases reached 30 in the region but the provincial government fears it could soar in the coming days. In addition, the government has decided to detain passengers who avoid taking the coronavirus test after returning to the country.

[https://tribune.com.pk/story/2180904/1-g-b-govt-imposes-section-144-ban-gatherings-coronavirus-cases-rise/?](https://tribune.com.pk/story/2180904/1-g-b-govt-imposes-section-144-ban-gatherings-coronavirus-cases-rise/)

Protests erupt in PoK against setting up of quarantine centres

Big News Network, March 23, 2020

Protests erupted in Mirpur city of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) against the setting up of quarantine centres for the coronavirus positive patients from other parts of Pakistan. The demonstrators shouted slogans against the Chief Secretary of PoK, saying that the move was a deliberate attempt to bring coronavirus patients from Pakistan to the occupied region. Javed, a local political leader and protester said, “We have told them that quarantine centres will not be allowed in the city. We are talking to the officials and will not let this happen. “There is a surge in the coronavirus patients in Pakistan and occupied areas like PoK and Gilgit Baltistan. The situation is turning grim in Gilgit Baltistan where a large number of Chinese are engaged in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

<https://www.bignewsnetwork.com/news/264397112/protests-erupt-in-pok-against-setting-up-of-quarantine-centres>

GB Govt decides to observe lockdown for indefinite period

The Nation, April 23, 2020

Gilgit-Baltistan government has decided to observe lockdown in the region for indefinite period and has appealed people to adopt preventive measures against coronavirus threat. Advisor to Chief Minister on Information, Shams Mir, at a news conference in

Gilgit said para-military forces have been asked to ensure lockdown and preventive measures. He said inter-city passenger transport service has also been suspended. Meanwhile, number of Coronavirus cases in Gilgit-Baltistan risen to seventy one today.

<https://nation.com.pk/23-Mar-2020/gb-govt-decides-to-observe-lockdown-for-indefinite-period>

Army working closely with Gilgit-Baltistan government: COAS

Business Recorder, March 25, 2020

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on March 24 said that Pakistanis would fight against COVID-19 as one. In a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the COAS said Pakistan Army was cognizant of the challenges facing the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. He said Pakistan Army was working closely with GB govt and civil administration to provide all possible support while additional resources were being arranged on war footing in conjunction with federal government. “Pakistan Army is cognizant of the challenges facing the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. We are working closely with GB govt and civil administration to provide all possible support while additional resources are being arranged on war footing,” the Army Chief said. General Qamar Javed Bajwa said, “We will never leave the people of GB alone in these challenging times.”

<https://www.brecorder.com/2020/03/25/583240/army-working-closely-with-gilgit-baltistan-government-coas/>

Huma Kashif, Melting Of Glaciers and Possible Climate Change In Region Of Gilgit-Baltistan

Eurasia Review, March 27, 2020

Gilgit-Baltistan is amidst the world’s greatest mountain ranges: the Himalayas, the Karakorum, and the Hindu Kush holding more than 7000 glaciers. The rugged, lofty and snow-capped mountains and glaciers have added to the beauty of Gilgit-Baltistan, but the melting of these glaciers have wreaked havoc in this region. According to the study, with an estimate

of 7250 number of glaciers, no other country on the earth outside the Polar region, has the greatest number of glaciers than Pakistan. The scientists have predicted that a third of the world's glaciers will be disappearing by the end of this century that would be having several consequences to Pakistan, especially to the people living in the northern areas of the country are dependent on these glaciers. The Glaciers in Gilgit-Baltistan are one of the tourist attraction sites; furthermore, they are frozen reservoirs that supply water to hundreds and millions of people and many of the rivers crossing through Pakistan are fed by these glaciers. But their melting have created havoc in this region, and the people are living in a perpetual fear of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), avalanches, river flows, and land sliding.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/28032020-melting-of-glaciers-and-possible-climate-change-in-region-of-gilgit-baltistan-oped/>

Jamil Nagri, Lone facility in Gilgit-Baltistan can test only 15 patients a day: CM

Dawn, March 28, 2020

Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Hafeezur Rehman on March 27 said that GB had the highest number of coronavirus patients in the country. He said that out of a total of 633 suspected coronavirus patients, 91 had tested positive for the virus while results for 332 were awaited. The chief minister pointed out that there was only one coronavirus testing centre in GB where only 15 patients could be tested in 24 hours. He appealed to the army chief to help in establishing more coronavirus testing laboratories in GB. Mr Rehman said only nine ventilators were available in GB and urged the federal government to provide 200 more ventilators. A health department official told Dawn on the condition of anonymity that there were many coronavirus patients in Nagar district, the hardest-hit area in Gilgit-Baltistan, but many could not be tested. Fifty samples were sent for testing from there and 34 of them were found to be positive. More than 100 samples of suspected patients had been sent

to Gilgit two weeks ago and their results were still awaited. "After getting the results we will be able to trace their contacts for further tests," he said. The official said it was alarming that out of 34 samples in the district, 14 were infected through local transmission. The local hospitals have no testing or screening facilities to deal with such cases, he added.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1544374>

COVID-19 Emergency, Total lockdown in Gilgit Baltistan, Military ready to enforce orders

Dardistan Times, March 27, 2020

The government of Gilgit Baltistan has decided to initiate total lockdown in Gilgit Baltistan in order to fight back COVID-19 outbreak. Military has been convened to assist the civil administration in enforcing the orders. The Chief Minister of Gilgit Baltistan, Hafiz Hafizur Rehman announced that out of 315 pilgrims who reached the region, 71 have been tested positive for COVID-19. The Chief Minister expressed concern over public not taking the situation seriously. "25% of the public was not taking the outbreak seriously. One cannot ignore such a large population who are not adhering to COVID norms." We have decided to initiate total lockdown in the entire region. Pakistan Army is ready to enforce the orders. Commandant FCNA has assured total cooperation from the military. Anyone found roaming outside will face legal action", Hafiz said. The chief minister also updated people about the number of COVID-19 cases in the region. All cases are either travel related or coming in close contacts with the travelers, primarily pilgrims returning home from Iran. "We had tested some 315 people and 71 have tested positive. The tests were done through NIH Islamabad." The Chief Minister said. There were still 101 presumptive cases with awaited test results from Islamabad.

<http://www.dardistantimes.com/news/gilgit-baltistan/1756/covid-19-emergency-total-lock-down-gilgit-baltistan-military-ready>

Economic Developments

AJK PM Raja Farooq Haider Khan says CPEC to bring about economic revolution

The Nation, March 12, 2020

On March 10th, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan said the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is not just a road or development project but a strategic alliance. This he observed while speaking as a chief guest on the launching ceremony of report titled: CPEC in Azad Kashmir; produced by Center for Peace and Development under the auspicious of Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad. The prime minister added that AJK's inclusion in the CPEC would bring economic revolution in the state. "China is Pakistan's sincere and time tested friend that always came forward and supported us at every stage," he argued. He said education and infrastructure are basic elements, which significantly contribute to the sustainable development. "We reformed both these sectors and aiming to turn state into a tourist center for all four seasons". Raja Farooq Haider said that Kalabagh Dam could not be built even today. However, contrary to it, Neelum Jehlum and Mangla upraising projects were completed without any use of force. "Work on Kohalla Project would also start soon," Haider informed.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/627829-ajk-pm-raja-farooq-haider-khan-says-cpec-to-bring-about-economic-revolution>

AJK govt imposes 3 week ban on tourists

Pakistan Today, March 17, 2020

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet on March 17 imposed a ban on arrival of tourists into Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) for a period of three weeks as a precautionary measure to deal with the increasing spread of coronavirus pandemic in the region. Senior

minister Chaudhary Tariq Farooq presided over the meeting. On the occasion, the Chief Secretary Mathar Niaz Rana briefed the cabinet members regarding the steps being taken to stop the outbreak of coronavirus in AJK. Speaking on the occasion, the ministers gave valuable suggestions for preventing Coronavirus pandemic in the region. They stressed the need for mobilizing the district administration for raising awareness among the common masses. They pointed out that Coronavirus had affected many countries, including China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Italy, and Spain. They expressed satisfaction over the steps being taken at the state level to control the pandemic. During the meeting, it was revealed that a high level state coordination committee has been set up to deal with coronavirus. "Ten district hospitals including AIIMS, CMH have separate wards to deal with these patients". Quarantine facility is also available. Moreover, district administration and the police have also been fully mobilised to deal the situation. The ministers were also briefed about the public awareness campaign being set in motion to educate general masses.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2020/03/17/ajk-govt-imposes-3-week-ban-tourists/>

Gilgit-Baltistan facing COVID-19 outbreak threat, CPEC projects hit

Yahoo News, March 20, 2020

Gilgit-Baltistan, a Pakistan-occupied region bordering China, is facing a threat of the coronavirus outbreak. A large number of Chinese workers and Army personnel are present here because of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. The region has already reported 21 positive cases of coronavirus, including a 14-year-old, who is under detention at an isolation centre in Skardu. In Pakistan,

a total of 456 confirmed coronavirus cases have been reported. China's One Belt One Road initiative is almost dead due to COVID-19 as countries where Chinese laborers are based are suffering the most. On the social media, people in Gilgit-Baltistan have shown concern as the region lacks basic health infrastructure and the outbreak of the disease will make it the most affected region. In a recent tweet, @Skardu_GB said, "Coronavirus can spread from China to Gilgit-Baltistan if the border is opened. Gilgit-Baltistan's government lacks basic health facilities. The border administration is not equipped to screen. The federal government must collaborate with GB govt. to take necessary steps before opening Khunjarab border." The multi-billion-dollar CPEC project, which connects China's Xinjiang to Pakistan's Gwadar port in Balochistan passes through

Gilgit-Baltistan, a part of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. A large number of Chinese workers and Army personnel are engaged in the project. The CPEC project in Pakistan was already facing a tough time due to the Pakistan government's lack of interest. In a recent interview to the Voice of America, chief minister of Gilgit-Baltistan, Hafeez-Ur-Rehman, expressed his concerns on slow progress in the CPEC projects, saying, "It was considered as a game-changer. However, the government's lack of interest is the main reason for slow progress in the CPEC." The outbreak of coronavirus will have a serious impact on the CPEC project.

<https://in.news.yahoo.com/gilgit-baltistan-facing-covid-19-outbreak-threat-cpec-104404141.html>

Extracts From Urdu Media

Land Reform and Concerns in Gilgit-Baltistan

Baad-e-Shimal, March 10, 2020

Gilgit-Baltistan provincial Minister for development has said that the Assembly needs to legislate so that 80 percent of barren land should be handover to the people and the remaining 20 percent should remain with the government for construction and development purposes. In his discussion with daily Baad-e-Shimal, the minister stated that the Awami Action Committee is unnecessarily blowing the issue out of proportion to sabotage the government. According to the minister, recommendations of the Land Reform Commission would be soon brought into the assembly for the legislation.

This debate regarding barren land and its ownership has been there since last years. The opposition political parties want local people to be given ownership of the land. The government's attempt to take ownership of the land is illegal and goes against the local norms and traditions. Since last two years, PPP has started the movement for giving people the ownership of the land. On the other hand, the local government is saying that the land belongs to the state. On this issue, civil society has also criticized the government's position on land reforms.

The local government formed a land reform commission to look at the barren land that is available. The PPP was quick in rejecting the commission. The PPP along with the Awami Action Committee started a movement against the land reform. While sensing the outrage, the PML-N government dropped the idea of bringing the legislation on Land Reform. According to sources, the PML-N government was advised not to rush on the issue as elections are approaching in the coming months. The ruling party was advised that people of the region are very sentimental regarding the land and any legislation will hurt PML-N's fortune in the coming elections.

The stand of the Awami Action Committee is very clear. They believe that G-B is not legally part of Pakistan and hence any ownership of land by people is not possible.

<http://www.dailybaadeshimal.com/?page=cGFnZS00&dt=MDMtMTAtMjAyMA==>

Don't touch Governance Order 2018: Provincial government to the Federal

Daily Salaam, March 12, 2020

In the Governance Order 2018 it is proposed that the system of governance in Gilgit-Baltistan should not be touched. This was mentioned in a letter written by the local government of Gilgit-Baltistan to the Federal government. The people of the region are satisfied with the rights enshrined in the Governance Order 2018. If the government at the center wants something good to happen in the region, then they should change this 2018 Order into a parliament act. The provincial government has rejected the Supreme Court order by saying that it is a controversial decision. People were on the streets to protest against this decision. If this decision is forced on the people, it can only further mistrust between the province and the center. These points were highlighted in the provincial letter written to the federal government.

<http://www.dailysalaam.com/index.php>

People should support in apprehending the criminal employees, I.G

Daily Baad-e-Shimal, March 21, 2020

The Inspector-General of Police, Gilgit-Baltistan, Dr. Mujeeb ur Rehman has said that People should come forward and share information against those employees who are creating mischief and unrest in the region. People should extend their help so that

region is kept safe from crimes. The I.G made these remarks while speaking to the media persons. He further said that those who are misusing social media would be dealt with by the F.I.A.

http://www.dailybaadeshimal.com/popup.php?r_date=03-21-2020&img=03-21-2020page-1-1

Syed Jaffar Shah Kazmi, Pakistan Day, Day of Pakistan Resolution and Gilgit-Baltistan

Daily Salaam, March 21, 2020

Every year on 23 March, the people of Pakistan celebrate the day with zeal. However, from 1947 to 2009, Pakistan has gone through political instability. This had a deleterious impact on Pakistan's internal politics and its economic conditions. From sectarian violence to suicide attacks and target killings, the country has been through difficult situation. But due to sacrifices made by security forces and other law enforcement agencies, peace and stability have finally returned. Two civilian governments have finally completed their terms.

Now a megaproject like the CPEC is progressing in full swing. Corruption and mistreatment of the region may create mistrust. People of G- B also celebrated Pakistan day with zeal. We fought against Dogras and established a full state. But when Kashmir issue was taken to the UNSC, Pakistan reacted in haste by bringing G-B into the Kashmir issue. From 1947 to 71, Pakistan was ruling us through the political agent. In 1974, the state subject was taken away. On the one hand, they made us a disputed territory and on the other hand, state subject law was abolished. This was sheer injustice with the region. This created mistrust and years later was responsible for riots and other conflicts.

Whenever we raise our voice against the injustices, we are being called traitors. Rather it was we who gave our freedom to Pakistan on a platter. The irony is that there is zero crime rate in G-B but schedule iv is still there, and laws like ATA are still used here.

<https://www.dailysalam.com/index.php>

Fact Sheet on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK)

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, 2010)

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)

Area: 13,297 square km

Population: 2017 Census: 4,045,367 (Male: 1,980,794; Female: 2,064,421)

Capital: Muzaffarabad

Divisions: 3

Districts: 10

Sub Divisions (Tehsils): 32

Constituencies in AJK: 29

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: Sardar Masood Khan

Prime Minister: Raja Farooq Haider Khan

AJK Council: Total 17 members

AJK Legislative Assembly: Total seats are 41

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: <https://pnda.jk.gov.pk/statyearbook.php?page=AJK%20at%20a%20Glance> accessed November 2020)

Gilgit-Baltistan

Area: 72,496 sq. kilometers

Population: 1.4 million (2017 census)

Capital: Gilgit

Districts: Fourteen

Baltistan Region (part of Ladakh) is divided into Ghanche, Skardu, Shigar, Kharmang, Rondu

Gilgit Region is divided into Astore, Ghizer, Diamer, Hunza, Nagar, Gilgit, Darel, Tangir, Yaseen

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 Assembly: 33 (3 reserved for technocrats and 6 for woman)

Governor of G-B: Raja Jalal Hussain Maqpoon

Chief Minister G-B: Khalid Khurshid Khan

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: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2019/06/17/gb-notifies-four-more-districts-total-number-of-districts-now-14/>)

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

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