

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

Volume 2 | Issue 28

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IT Park **Indus River POK**
Regulatory Authority
Gilgit-Baltistan **tourism**
Neelum-Jhelum
Hydropower Project



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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Political Developments

In a phone call with Iran's President, PM Shehbaz appreciates support on the Kashmir issue

Business Recorder, July 11, 2022

The Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a telephonic conversation with the president of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, appreciated Tehran's 'steadfast support' to Pakistan on the 'issue of Kashmir', especially from the supreme leader of Iran.' PM Shehbaz further underlined the significance of historic ties between the two countries and reiterated his government's strong commitment to boost bilateral relations in all areas of cooperation, including trade, energy, electricity, and people-to-people contacts. The prime minister further expressed the hope that border sustenance markets would soon become functional to "facilitate livelihood in the border region.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40185338/in-phone-call-with-irans-president-pm-shehbaz-appreciates-support-on-kashmir-issue>

Resolution of Kashmir issue imperative for the stability and regional peace: NA Speaker, Deputy Speaker

The Nation, July 13, 2022

The speaker of the Pakistan National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf and Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani said that the people of 'occupied Kashmir' have made 'eternal sacrifices' for the sake of independence. On the

occasion of Kashmir Martyrs' Day (observed on July 13), they said that the blood of 'unarmed' Kashmiris, who were martyred by the Indian forces would not go in vain and the day was not far when the people of Kashmir would see the dawn of freedom in 'occupied Kashmir' through their relentless struggle for their right to self-determination. They said that the Kashmir issue was an 'unfinished agenda' of partition of subcontinent without which lasting peace in South Asia is impossible. The speaker said that thousands of innocent children have been martyred in 'occupied Kashmir' for the last 75 years and thousands of incidents of 'desecration and rape of women' have taken place, added that the democratic government of India was 'stained' with the 'blood' of thousands of 'Kashmiri martyrs.'

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/07/13/resolution-of-kashmir-issue-imperative-for-stability-and-regional-peace-na-speaker-deputy-speaker/>

India's efforts to weaken Kashmiris' spirit of freedom to fail: Mushaal

Business Recorder, July 13, 2022

The chairperson of the peace and culture organization, Mushaal Hussein Mullick said that India was making every effort to weaken the Kashmiris' spirit of freedom, stressing that Kashmiris would not be 'intimidated' by such 'nefarious tactics' rather such actions will further strengthen Kashmiris' commitment to the liberation movement. While paying tribute to the martyrs of July 13, 1931,

she said that martyrdom that had taken place in 1931 since then the 'liberation' of Jammu and Kashmir was a 'continuation' of the martyrs' mission. She said that the Indian 'occupation forces' have 'martyred' hundreds of thousands of Kashmiris and grievously hurt millions of families in the 'Indian Illegal Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK), added that still, they have failed to break the will of the Kashmiris and weaken their resolve to secure freedom from 'Indian occupation.' She said that India's 'illegal' and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019, aimed at erasing the distinct identity of the people of Kashmir have further encouraged the Kashmiris' quest for freedom and self-determination.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40185527/indias-efforts-to-weaken-kashmiris-spirit-of-freedom-to-failsays-mushaal>

Pakistan expresses solidarity with Kashmiris on 91st Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Kashmir

Radio Pakistan, July 13, 2022

The Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said that the government and people of Pakistan are observing the 91st Kashmir Martyrs' Day. The spokesperson said that Kashmiris are still struggling against India's 'illegal occupation', and added that the 900,000 Indian 'occupation forces' continue to hold 'hostage' the Kashmiri people under the worst form of 'military siege.' He urged India to immediately halt its 'state-terrorism' in the 'Indian

Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir', stop 'human rights violations', release all political prisoners, lift the 'in-human military siege', stop its attempts to change the demographic structure of the 'occupied territory', and let the Kashmiri people exercise their legitimate right to self-determination. The spokesperson urged the international community, international human rights organizations, and particularly the United Nations and its human rights mechanism to take notice of the 'dire human rights' and humanitarian situation in the 'IIOJK' and ensure peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

<https://www.radio.gov.pk/13-07-2022/pakistan-expresses-solidarity-with-kashmiris-on-91st-youm-e-shuhada-e-kashmir>

Shehryar Afridi ousted as Kashmir committee chief

The Express Tribune, July 15, 2022

The parliamentary special committee on Kashmir passed a no-confidence motion against its chairman Shehryar Afridi, who is also a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader, and have elected a new chairman. The meeting of the special committee was chaired by the additional national assembly secretary and no members of the former ruling PTI including Afridi attended the session. As chairman of the special committee on Kashmir affairs, Afridi had previously urged overseas Pakistanis to lobby for the Kashmir cause in their host countries in

collaboration with the Overseas Pakistanis Global Foundation (OPGF) and Graana.com. After Afridi's ouster, Syed Basit Bukhari has taken over as the chairman. While talking to the media, Bukhari said that he will take the 'core issues' of Kashmir forward with the cooperation of committee members. Before the meeting, Afridi said that the 'imported government' was bringing a no-confidence motion against him by convening a meeting of the Kashmir Committee. He added former prime minister Imran Khan had raised his voice for the Kashmir issue at every international and regional forum.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2365900/shehryar-afridi-ousted-as-kashmir-committee-chief>

Webinar on Kashmir Martyrs' Day held at IUB

The Nation, July 15, 2022

A webinar on the occasion of Kashmir Martyrs' Day was organized at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB). The Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the IUB, Dr. Mahboob presided over the Webinar and Mushaal Hussein Mullick was the chief guest. During the event, Mushaal said that the entire Pakistani nation stands side by side with Kashmiri's right to self-determination and in every forum of the world, added that India's 'negative propaganda' can be answered with 'scholarly and legal arguments.' The VC said that IUB as a higher educational institution 'strives' for the 'independence of Kashmiris' and expresses to raise voices to highlight the 'oppression' of Kashmiris

and 'serious human rights violations' at the national and international levels, added that for this purpose, a special Kashmir society of students and social media team will be formed. Dr. Noshina Saleem, Director, School of Communication Studies, Punjab University, Lahore, said that teachers and students should present 'research papers' in international journals on Kashmir, especially the 'freedom movement', and highlight the real issue at home and abroad.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/07/15/webinar-on-kashmir-martyrs-day-held-at-iub/>

Peace will stay elusive without resolution of Kashmir dispute: Federal minister

The Express Tribune, July 15, 2022

The federal minister for planning, development and special initiatives Ahsan Iqbal said that durable peace between Pakistan and India would continue to be 'elusive' unless the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir was resolved under the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. While addressing a press conference at the UN, the minister expressed concern over the 'plight' of the people under 'foreign occupation' in Jammu and Kashmir, who have been suffering 'brutal oppression, extrajudicial killings, human rights violations, extended curfews, lockdowns, arbitrary detention, and illegal demographic displacement.' He said that after the 'illegal' and unilateral measures of

August 5, 2019, to 'snatch' Jammu and Kashmir's identity, the Indian authorities have been mounting a massive campaign of 'repression' against the people. He claimed that these 'measures' were an attempt to change the 'demography' of the Muslim-majority state to 'transform' it into a Hindu-majority territory by 'eliminating' the 'indigenous Muslim' population and 'settling' down Hindus from across India in the area. He said India's August 05 move 'created barriers' to a just resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2366059/peace-will-stay-elusive-without-resolution-of-kashmir-dispute-minister>

Kashmiris demand Justice on International Day of Justice: Pasban-e-Hurriyat

Daily Parliament Times, July 17, 2022

The chairman of Pasban-e-Hurriyat, Uzair Ahmad Ghazali has said that the Kashmiri people remained 'deprived' of Justice while the world celebrated the International Day of Justice. He said that people in 'Indian occupied' Jammu and Kashmir are facing Indian 'atrocities' but they are determined for their just freedom movement. He said that millions of citizens in Kashmir are 'victims of organized Indian terrorism' and that International Day of Justice has no meaning for the Kashmiri people who demand 'freedom, self-determination' and justice because they are subjected to 'daily brutality and bloodshed.' Ghazali said that the

Indian government under the guise of 'so-called democracy' has usurped every 'democratic, social, political, religious and human rights of people, added that along with Indian 'brutal' leaders and 'armed forces', Indian 'biased judiciary' has also failed in provision of justice to Kashmiri people.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/07/17/kashmiris-demand-justice-on-international-day-of-justice/>

The effective diplomatic campaign needed for Kashmir settlement: President of 'AJK'

Pakistan Observer, July 17, 2022

The President of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry, while talking to the executive director of Kashmiri Scandinavian Council, Sardar Ali Shahnawaz Khan at Kashmir House has said that an effective global diplomatic campaign is the need of the hour to resolve the Kashmir dispute. He stressed that Kashmiri leadership in Belgium and European Parliament could play an important role by raising the Kashmir dispute and bringing an end to the 'spate of violence' and 'bloodshed' in Indian 'occupied' Kashmir. He asserted to launch a full-fledged diplomatic and political campaign to apprise the world about the 'grave' situation of 'occupied Kashmir.'

While lauding the services of the Kashmir Scandinavian Council for the Kashmir cause, Sultan Mehmood has

said that the Kashmiri diaspora community settled abroad has played a vital role in highlighting the Kashmir issue at international fora. He said that a protest demonstration is being arranged and planned in New York on the occasion of the United Nations General Assembly session in September this year. He said that Kashmir is a United Nations recognized disputed territory and its resolution is a must for permanent peace in the subcontinent. Sardar Ali Shahnawaz Khan said that the Norwegian government, also interested in helping resolve the Kashmir dispute, is a significant and commendable development, added that Norway has always played a key role in 'internationalizing' the Kashmir dispute and has supported its peaceful settlement.

<https://pakobserver.net/effective-diplomatic-campaign-needed-for-kashmir-settlement-ajk-president/>

Economic Developments

GB tourism department takes flak over 'delay' in trekking permits

Dawn, July 14, 2022

The tourism department of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) is under fire for its alleged failure to issue trekking permits to dozens of foreign tourists who arrived in Skardu to visit the base camps of towering cliffs, including the mountain K-2. The travel agents and tourists have complained that they were not issued permits by the

department even though they fulfilled all the requirements, adding that the tourism department was reluctant to issue trekking permits and that tourists had been waiting for more than one month. The long delays in the approval of the permits also resulted in many tourists canceling their plans including 10 foreign tourists who had visited Pakistan for the K-2 base camp trek. Sajid Hussain, deputy director of the GB tourism department said that foreign tourists apply for trekking or expedition permits after their arrival they need to do that manually and the process could take up to 28 days. The official added that as per the guidelines, such applications needed to go through security clearance before the issuance of the permits.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1699524/gb-tourism-dept-takes-flak-over-delay-in-trekking-permits>

Restoration of power supply from Neelum-Jhelum project ordered

Dawn, July 14, 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif took notice of a technical fault in the 969-Megawatt (MW) Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project (HPP) and directed relevant departments to ensure immediate restoration of power supply from the project. The PM expressed annoyance over the technical failure of the project which suspended the supply of environment-friendly electricity to the national grid during the peak summer season. The meeting was told that power production from the project had been affected owing to

the closure of the 3km tailrace water tunnel. The PM directed the authorities concerned to hold an inquiry into the incident through a 'reputable' international organization besides ensuring restoration of the power plant. He said that the government was about to introduce an effective mechanism for pre-qualification, third-party monitoring, and evaluation of companies to ensure transparency and quality of the development projects.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1699495/restoration-of-power-supply-from-neelum-jhelum-project-ordered>

Authorities were unable to detect the fault in the Neelum Jhelum HP tunnel

The Nation, July 15, 2022

The National Assembly Committee on Water Reprocess informed that authorities are unable to detect the fault in Neelum Jhelum Hydropower (HP) tunnel after the passage of 10 days, and it may take a month for finding it. The Neelum Jhelum HP has two tunnels, a tunnel which is three and a half kilometers long, is blocked, added that water will be extracted from the tunnel and the process will be completed in a month, the secretary said. The Committee expressed concern that Indus River Regulatory Authority (IRSA) failed to develop a proper mechanism of water distribution among the provinces over the period due to mismanagement and lack of coordination with the provinces. The committee directed that IRSA may develop proper liaison with all

provinces and adopt remedial measures to ensure the timely provision of water so that they could fulfill their water requirements accordingly. The IRSA officials told the committee that the current rainfall is less than the total water requirement and that there is ten percent water in Mangala and more rains are needed to fill the dam, added that our water storage is still less than seventy percent. On the question of India's water retention, it was told that there is no storage dam on the river Chenab and also on the Jhelum, adding that Wular Lake is natural, it is not possible to control it.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/07/15/authorities-unable-to-detect-fault-in-neelum-jhelum-hydrpower-tunnel-mps-told/>

CM inaugurated an IT park in GB

Mahasib, July 15, 2022

The Chief Minister (CM) of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Khalid Khurshid inaugurated the first ever government-run software Information Technology (IT) Park in GB. The IT Park will act as a free-of-cost co-working space for business activities, freelancers, and tech-savvy men, women, and students of GB. The GB CM said that his government has already notified a dedicated IT ministry and in this regard, the cabinet also approved the formation of the GB IT board and added that a loan of up to 30 lakhs will be available for IT-related businesses. He also said that a Memorandum of Understanding has also been signed

between Karakoram Cooperative Bank Limited (KCBL) and the IT ministry of GB. The KCBL will provide 30 million in finance for potential IT start-ups in GB.

<http://mahasib.com.pk/epaper/gilgit.php>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

India has violated basic human rights by banning Eid prayers: APHC leader

UrduPoint, July 11, 2022

The convener of the 'Azad Kashmir' branch of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), Mahmood Ahmad Sagar said that the 'occupying' Indian administration had 'imposed restrictions' on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha prayers in areas including the historic Jama Masjid and Central Eidgah in Srinagar. He said that by 'imposing restrictions', the Kashmiri people have been deprived of basic human rights as well as religious rights, adding that by locking the main gate of the historic Jama Masjid in Srinagar, India does not care about the religious sentiments of Kashmiri Muslims. He said that Indian troops had intensified their 'atrocities' in the 'occupied territory' and said that the basic reality of the Kashmir dispute could not be changed by the 'inhuman tactics' of India. He said that the only solution to the problem lay in the implementation of United Nations (UN) resolutions, therefore the Kashmiri people should be given the right to decide their future.

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/national-news/live-news-3199400.html>

Kashmiris have kept alive the flame of freedom from the Indian yoke: PM Shehbaz Sharif

Jasarat, July 13, 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has said that the 'generations' of Kashmiris have kept alive the 'flame of freedom' in the face of Indian 'tyranny and oppression.' While referring to Kashmir Martyrs' Day (13 July), he said that the day is a 'reminder of sacrifices' which Kashmiris are still kept fighting for their right to self-determination as sanctioned by the United Nations.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2022/07/13/shahbaz-sharif-59/>

'Oppression of occupying Indian forces' could not suppress Kashmiris' independence movement: President of Pakistan

UrduPoint, July 13, 2022

The president of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi said that the 'aggression' and the 'cheap tactics' of the 'Indian occupation forces' had neither 'succeeded' in the past, nor would be able to 'succeed' in the future to suppress the 'indigenous' movement of the Kashmiri people. While paying tribute on Kashmir Martyrs Day, he said that the resolution of the Kashmir dispute under the United Nations Security Council resolutions only could guarantee regional peace. He said that the Kashmir Martyrs' Day was also a reminder of the decades-old struggle of the Kashmiri people for their right to self-determination, and added that the

people of Kashmir had been sacrificing their lives since generations to keep the passion for 'freedom' alive. He demanded that the 'Indian occupation forces' need to stop the 'human rights abuses' in 'occupied Kashmir' and urged India to take measures for holding an 'impartial plebiscite.' He said that on Kashmir Martyrs' Day, the nation should 'reiterate a pledge' to continue its diplomatic, moral and political support to the Kashmiri people till they get their 'right to self-determination.'

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/important-news/live-news-3200713.html>

India has become a 'rogue' state: JMI leader

Jasarat, July 14, 2022

The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) leader, Liaquat Baloch has said that India has become a 'rogue' state which is 'cheating' with the people of 'occupied Kashmir.' He added that the people of Jammu and Kashmir have been making 'everlasting sacrifices' for the 'independence' of Kashmir since the time of colonial and Dogra rule. He said that India's 'occupation of Jammu and Kashmir' is 'illegitimate' and 'cruel', added that the people of 'Azad Kashmir', Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), 'occupied Kashmir' and Jammu have to resist as one unit and one soul to break the chains of slavery against India.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2022/07/14/india-has-become-a-rogue-state-liaquat-baloch/>

The global community, and human rights bodies must play their due role to resolve the Kashmir dispute: 'AJK' president

Mahasib, July 15, 2022

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry, while talking to a delegation of All Neighbors International (ANI), Ilyas Masih, Dr. Joe Knight, Mike Crow, Lucas Bontergar among others said that it was high time that the international community and human rights organizations should come forward to help resolve the protracted Kashmir dispute that happens to be the major cause and consequence of 'human rights violations' in the region. While briefing the delegates about the ongoing situation in the 'Indian occupied Kashmir', he said that the fast 'deteriorating' political and 'human rights' situation in Kashmir requires urgent attention of the international community as well as the human rights organizations, adding that there was a dire need that world 'influential' governments should influence India to allow a fact-finding mission to visit the 'occupied Kashmir' to take stock of the situation. During the event, Ilyas Masih the head of the delegation, and Dr. Joe Knight assured the president that the ANI would continue to play its role in promoting peace and brotherhood across the globe.

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

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Disclaimer

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