

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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Gilgit-Baltistan POK
energy national grid tourism
crisis Diemer Bhasha
Dasu Hydro Power
authoritarian tourism promotion



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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Political Developments

Meeting of JKLF Supreme Council holds in Central Information Office

Daily Parliament Times, 18 July 2022

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Supreme Council, the highest policy and decision-making body of the party held a meeting under the chairmanship of Raja Haq Nawaz Khan. The head of the policy and planning committee Hafiz Muhammad Anwar, vice chairman Sardar Zahid Hussain Khan (Belgium), head of JKLF diplomatic bureau, professor Raja Zafar Khan (UK), central deputy secretary finance Hafiz Mumtaz Ahmed (Qatar), president of North America Muhammad Haleem Khan (New York), president of Europe Zone, Malik Mushtaq Pasha (France) among others also participated in this meeting. A detailed assessment report based on the 'Asseer-e-Wahdat' long march, held by JKLF against Indian 'judicial terrorism' and 'criminal silence' of the international community, especially the United Nations (UN) was presented at the meeting. The long march (held on June 26-28) was announced by JKLF after its party chairman Muhammad Yasin Malik was 'unfairly' sentenced to life imprisonment by an Indian special court in New Delhi. They strongly condemned the use of police force by the government of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) and the Muzaffarabad administration to disrupt the march which resulted in injuries to dozens of peaceful protesters and led to the arrest of around 150 party leaders and workers.

While giving details of the meeting, the central spokesperson of the party, Muhammad Rafiq Dar said it was decided that as an expression of solidarity with Yasin Malik, JKLF will hold token hunger strike camps in 'AJK' and Gilgit-Baltistan on 21st, 22nd, and 23rd July besides Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi. In addition to protests, hunger strike camps shall also be organized around the world, especially in important power centers like London, Brussels, and New York. The meeting also deliberated on the subject of local body elections in 'Azad Kashmir' and a committee was formed under the leadership of Sajid Siddiqui, JKLF president of 'Azad Kashmir', and Gilgit-Baltistan Zone, which will analyze the ground realities to present a detailed report on the next meeting of the Supreme Council.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/07/18/meeting-of-jklf-supreme-council-holds-in-central-information-office/>

Accession Day: Kashmiris call for an end to India's 'brutalities' in 'IIOJK': JKSM Leader

The Express Tribune, 19 July 2022

The Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) chairman Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that the resolution passed (19th July 1947) by the Kashmiri people in Srinagar, 25 days before the creation of Pakistan, was a 'clear message' to India and the world that Kashmiris do not want to 'live with India' and that the historic resolution has been passed on 19 July 1947, to make the 'accession' of the state of

Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan a reality. He said that the international community should stop India's 'illegal, immoral, apolitical and unilateral' actions of suspending Articles 35A and 370, and the international community should also 'condemn' India's 'brutalities' in Jammu and Kashmir and bring the 'criminals' of the 'occupation' army to justice. He further said that Pakistan also needs to take concrete steps along with its political, moral, and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris for their 'right to self-determination' via a free and impartial referendum in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He urged the international community to play their role in releasing the Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders and activists imprisoned in the jails of the 'occupation forces.'

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2366696/accesion-day-kashmiris-call-for-end-to-indias-brutalities-in-iiojk>

The day is not far away when Kashmiris will break the 'shackles' of Indian 'slavery:' PM of 'AJK'

Daily Parliament Times, 19 July 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Tanveer Ilyas Khan, while referring to 'Kashmir's accession' to Pakistan on 19 July 1947, hoped that the day was not far when people of the 'Indian occupied Kashmir' (IOK) would be free from the 'shackles' of India's 'forcible occupation'. According to him people of the entire 'occupied state' will come together under the shadow of the 'green flag.' While highlighting the

'historic' importance of the 19th July 1947 resolution, he said that since 1947, the Kashmiri people have made numerous 'sacrifices' to implement the resolution of 'accession to Pakistan.' He claimed that despite using all means of 'oppression' and 'suppression', India has 'miserably failed' to suppress the Kashmiris' 'legitimate struggle' for the right to 'self-determination' and their 'love for Pakistan.' While calling 5th August 2019 as one of the 'darkest days' of Kashmir history, he said that since the Indian government stripped the region of its special status on 05 August 2019, not a 'single Kashmiri' is ready to talk to India, added that India had 'stabbed' in the back of Kashmiri people and 'snatched' their identity.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/07/19/day-is-not-far-away-when-kashmiris-will-break-the-shackles-of-indian-slavery-pm-ajk/>

PML-N 'AJK' opposes India's plan to host the G-20 summit in 'IIOJK'

The Express Tribune, 20 July 2022

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) chapter president Shah Ghulam Qadir said that the PML-N 'AJK' will strongly oppose the G-20 summit scheduled to be held in the 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK). He said that 'IIOJK' was a disputed territory where any kind of international event had no significance except to 'please' India, added that India was trying to 'hoodwink' the world on the 'current situation' of the 'occupied territory.' He urged the government of Pakistan and

the Pakistan Foreign Office to oppose the G-20 summit.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2366897/pml-n-ajk-opposes-india-hosted-g-20-summit-in-ijok>

‘AJK’ observes Kashmir’s accession to Pakistan day

Dawn, 20 July 2022

The people across ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (AJK) observed 75th ‘accession to Pakistan day’ to renew their ‘affiliation’ with Pakistan and swore to translate the dreams of ‘Kashmiri martyrs’ to ‘overthrow’ India’s ‘illegal occupation’ of their motherland. The rallies and other events were held in different parts of the state to mark the day which commemorates the passage of a resolution on 19 July 1947, by the Working Committee of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference at its meeting in Srinagar whereby it had called for the Muslim majority state’s ‘accession’ to the ‘yet-to-be-created dominion of Pakistan.’

The Pasban-i-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir (PHJK), an organization of post-1989 migrants from India’s ‘occupied territory’ took a rally in Muzaffarabad to show their love for Pakistan and raised the slogans: ‘we are Pakistanis and Pakistan is ours.’ The PHJK chief Uzair Ahmed Ghazali in his address claimed that when the ‘Kashmiri youths’ wave Pakistani flags in front of ‘Indian bullets and bayonets’ and when the coffins of martyrs are draped with ‘Pakistani flags’, it’s the ‘renewal’ of their ‘intellectual

commitment’ with Pakistan and the July 19 resolution.

During the event, ‘AJK’ minister for local government and rural development Khawaja Farooq Ahmed said that Pakistan Accession Day was a reflection of an ‘unbreakable relationship’ between the Kashmiri people and Pakistan, added that ‘geographically, linguistically and religiously’, the state of Jammu and Kashmir is an ‘integral part’ of Pakistan. He urged the state-run Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Commission to publish booklets related to such national events and distribute them to the public so that the ‘history’ of these days could be enlightened to the masses in the true sense.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1700551/ajk-observes-kashmir-accession-to-pakistan-day>

Indian ‘oppression’ has failed to stop Kashmiris’ resistance: PM of Pakistan

The Nation, 20 July 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan, Shehbaz Sharif in his message on Kashmir ‘Accession to Pakistan Day’ said that the ‘Indian oppressive’ state apparatus had failed to stop the journey of ‘resistance, sacrifice and defiance’ of Kashmiris, added that the Kashmir’s ‘Accession to Pakistan’ reflects their pledge to continue their struggle till the idea of ‘accession’ becomes a reality.’ While paying tributes to the ‘persistent struggle’ of Kashmiris, he said that we salute Kashmiris’ courage, and added that

after the passage of the resolution for 'accession to Pakistan', the people of 'Azad Kashmir' and Gilgit-Baltistan fought a big struggle for freedom. He said that the struggle and sacrifices of Kashmiris which was initiated in 1947 continue and the 9 million 'Indian occupational' troops have not succeeded in bringing down the 'passion of Kashmiris.' He said that Pakistan would continue to extend support to Kashmiris till the 'realization' of their dream of holding a 'plebiscite' under the resolutions of the United Nations and as per the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/07/20/indian-oppression-has-failed-to-stop-kashmiris-resistance-pm/>

All-party task force on Kashmir formed

Pakistan Observer, 21 July 2022

To highlight the issue of Kashmir and raise a voice in the international arena for the release of Kashmiri leaders including Yasin Malik, an All-party Task Force for Kashmir was established with former Governor of Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar as its chairman. The Task Force includes representatives of all political parties, including PTI, PML-N, Pakistan People's Party, Muslim Conference, and Jamaat-e-Islami. In this regard, Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar had 'contacted' the British parliamentarians and human rights representatives and raised their voices against the 'atrocities' being committed against 'Kashmiris' including Yasin Malik. He

said that India is resorting to 'worst atrocities' on Kashmiris and all the political and religious parties of Pakistan are united on the issue of Kashmir.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40187099/all-party-task-force-on-kashmir-formed>

Pakistan FO hits out at India for implicating Yasin Malik in more 'fictitious cases'

The Express Tribune, 22 July 2022

The Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) 'strongly condemned' India's recent move of 'implicating' Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik in two more 'fictitious cases', which have been created around incidents that took place more than 30 years ago. The FO in its statement said that the cases have been reopened under the 'draconian' Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA) in a clear attempt to perpetuate Yasin Malik's political 'victimization', and added that Yasin Malik is already serving out a life sentence awarded to him after a 'sham trial' by an Indian court on May 25, 2022. The statement further added that Yasin Malik is also being 'denied' the right to personal appearance in the ongoing trial, in complete 'contravention' of legal and democratic norms.

The FO further claimed that once again India has employed the judiciary as a 'tool' to damage the morale of the Kashmiris by making their true leadership a target of 'flagrant prejudice', which had compelled Malik

to take the desperate decision of going on a hunger strike unto death from 22 July 2022. According to the statement, the inhuman incarceration of Yasin Malik meant to defile the 'legitimate struggle' and terming it as 'terrorism' is nothing but further corroboration of India's known credentials of being a serial 'violin of human rights' and the 'fundamental rights' of the Kashmiri people. It further noted that the Kashmiris' 'struggle' for the right to self-determination is 'indigenous' and cannot be diminished by the 'draconian strong-arm tactics' of the Indian government.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2367110/pakistan-hits-out-at-india-for-implicating-yasin-malik-in-more-fictitious-cases>

Economic Developments

Timely completion of Water Resources is the top priority of the government: Federal Minister

The Nation, 18 July 2022

The federal minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Ahmad Shah said that the timely completion of under-construction water resources was the top priority of the government, and added that the country could face a major water crisis in case of failure to meet the prescribed time limit. He maintained that Diamer Bhasha Dam, Dasu Dam, Tha Kot Dam, and Patan Dam were vital to overcoming the energy crisis in the country noting that the careful utilization of water resources is imperative for the country. The minister said that the country

could not tolerate negligence in the construction of these reservoirs, adding that it was a matter of national integrity.

He directed the concerned agencies to make immediate feasibility of the tunnel to be constructed on Diamer Bhasha Dam which has a live storage capacity of the 6.4-Million-acre-foot (MAF). The dam has an installed capacity of 4500 MW of cheap power and it is being constructed on the river Indus. Similarly, Dasu Hydro Power Project is a vital project that would trigger a new era of socio-economic development in the country and stabilize Pakistan's economy by providing low-cost hydel electricity to the masses. Its installed capacity is 4320 MW per annum. Similarly, the Thakot hydropower project will have a capacity of 4,000 MW and produce annual energy of 21,300 Gas Water Heaters (GWh) for the national grid.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/07/18/timely-completion-of-water-resources-goots-top-priority-khurshid-shah/>

Power consumers pay an extra Rs 350 million

The Express Tribune, 20 July 2022

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) criticized the chief executive officer of the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project for the closure of the plant, which put a burden of Rs 350 million per day on consumers. The 969-Mega Watt (MW) Neelum-Jhelum power plant had been shut on July 6, 2022, due

to a technical fault. The power-sector regulator noted that the consumers were bearing an additional burden of Rs 350 million per day as many power plants were being run on expensive fuel. Before the closing, the Neelum-Jhelum plant had been producing 950 MW to 960 MW in the peak summer season to meet the rising electricity demand. However, the management of the plant has so far not been able to rectify the technical fault and restore operations. The project management apprised NEPRA that the experts were investigating the fault and would take remedial measures once the fault was detected. NEPRA chairman Tauseef H Farooqi directed the Neelum-Jhelum project CEO to expedite the restoration of the plant to connect it to the national grid considering its importance as a reliable and cheaper source of renewable electricity. Meanwhile, the hydropower station has been closed amid tight security, however, with the closure of the power station, the country's electricity shortfall reached 7,324 MW.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2366783/power-consumers-pay-extra-rs350m>

'AJK' govt plans authoritarian tourism promotion body

Dawn, 20 July 2022

The government of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) is likely to introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly of 'AJK' to establish an 'authoritarian tourism promotion' body that would 'override several laws' or their provisions, including the decades-old forest

protection regulations. The details of the bill were partly leaked on social media, which has triggered 'serious apprehensions' and criticism from political and civil society activists who believe it may pave the way for an 'unwarranted' human intervention in the territory's highlands, particularly in Neelum valley, and thus aggravate global warming and biodiversity loss. The proposed 'AJK' Tourism Promotion (Amendment) Act 2022 is in effect an updated version of a previous law enacted by the Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz (PML-N) government in 2019, whereby an eight-member State Tourism Executive Committee (STEC) was constituted to formulate rules, regulations, and policy about tourism promotion.

However, the new bill proposes the establishment of an assertive Special Tourism Zone Development Authority to 'plan, manage, control, supervise and monitor the activities' in the 'special tourism zone' to be identified by it. It has proposed eight civil servants and two representatives of the army as members of the authority while the terms and conditions, qualifications, and experience of the chairman to be appointed by the government would be prescribed later. The Authority shall be a corporate body with the power to acquire, hold and dispose of property, both moveable and immovable as noted in the bill. The tourism department shall maintain a close link with the Authority on all matters about special tourism zone projects and facilitate

smooth functioning of 'one window operation' ensuring that project development activities are undertaken by the investor.

While the Authority has been empowered to appoint officials and consultants on its own and within its budget, it has been made mandatory for all government departments intending to start any project in a special tourism zone to obtain a prior No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Authority. Since some parts of the proposed bill have been leaked on social media which led to criticism, for instance, PML-N 'AJK' chapter secretary general Chaudhry Tariq Farooq noted that since there is already a tourism department in 'AJK', a Tourism Authority is being set up to 'fulfill some nefarious purposes, overriding the state laws', added that 'valuable land will be sold or leased entirely.'

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1700554/ajk-govt-plans-authoritarian-tourism-promotion-body>

No compromise on fiscal, and administrative rights of 'Azad Kashmir:' PML-N

Dawn, 21 July 2022

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) regional president and secretary general, Shah Ghulam Qadir has said that there will be no 'compromise' on the 'fiscal' and 'administrative rights' achieved by 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) four years ago through the 13th amendment to its constitution. He asserted that PML-N central leadership maintained

that the 'rights and powers' granted to the 'AJK' government under the 13th amendment would neither be 'surrendered nor reduced.' He further said PM Sharif's adviser for Kashmir affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira had also told a PML-N 'AJK' chapter delegation that as such no draft had been prepared for the much talked about 15th amendment.

He further said that the 13th amendment gave rights to a common man in 'AJK' and there isn't a single point in it that runs 'counter' to the 'interests' of the state of Pakistan. He also said that his party opposed a proposed piece of law being introduced in the 'AJK' Legislative Assembly by the PTI government in the name of 'tourism promotion', terming it 'anti-state, anti-people and anti-environment.' He further said that his party took strong exception to a proposed bill envisaging the establishment of a tourism authority and special tourism zones in 'AJK', added that the proposed bill aimed at grabbing forest land and other beautiful attractive tourist sites... and we will strongly oppose it at every forum, including in the 'AJK' Legislative Assembly.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1700734>

Tourism will be promoted as an industry in 'AJK:' PM Ilyas

Pakistan Observer, 22 July 2022

The Prime Minister (PM) of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that tourism will be promoted as an industry in 'AJK',

however, he noted that there can be no compromise on forest 'conservation' and the protection of the 'environment' in the region. While highlighting the purpose of creating a Tourism Authority (TA), he said that the proposed Authority was being created to provide better facilities to investors through one-window operation and added that the promotion of tourism would not only help to enhance the region's economy but also provide employment opportunities to the unemployed and educated youth. He further said that the government is reviewing the Tourism corridor project to further improve it and emphasized that the government will provide full protection to the local population and investors, at tourist spots. He further said that besides introducing new tourist spots, tourist and recreational places would be built around the rivers and lakes in the state to further boost tourism. He said that the officials of the tourism department have been instructed to provide good accommodation, organic foods, adventure tourism, water sports, safari parks, and horse riding for the tourists coming to 'Azad Kashmir.'

<https://pakobserver.net/tourism-will-be-promoted-as-industry-in-ajk-ilyas/>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

Pakistan and Kashmir are inseparable: 'AJK' president

Mahasib, 19 July 2022

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) Sultan Mahmood

Chaudhry has said that Kashmir and Pakistan are 'inseparable', and added that India has forcefully 'deprived' Kashmiris of their universally recognized right to self-determination for the last several decades. However, he emphasized that the Kashmiri people will never allow India's 'nefarious plot' to succeed. While speaking on the occasion of 'Kashmir Accession to Pakistan Day', he said that July 19, 1947, is an important chapter in the history of Kashmir and added that under the formula of Partition of India, states' accession was to be decided through a referendum as laid down by the United Nations and subsequently accepted by India, however, he noted that subsequent events have shown that the Indian rulers completely 'deviated' from their promise, which resulted at the beginning of the right to self-determination movement, which continues till today. He further said that on July 19, 1947, the historic decision of the top leadership of Kashmiris shaped the 'direction' of the 'freedom struggle' towards the goal of the right to self-determination. He appealed to the people of Pakistan to create unity and consensus to prevent conspiracies against Pakistan and urged the 'Kashmiri brothers' on this occasion to play their full role in highlighting the importance of the idea of 'Kashmir accession to Pakistan.'

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

Pakistan reaffirms diplomatic, political, and moral support to Kashmiris: President of Pakistan

Mahasib, 20 July 2022

While giving his message on the occasion of Jammu and Kashmir's 'Accession to Pakistan Day,' president of Pakistan, Arif Alvi 'reaffirmed' Pakistan's commitment to continue to support the 'brave Kashmiri' people in their 'struggle' for the right to self-determination. He said that the nation of Pakistan renew its pledge to stand in solidarity with the Kashmiri people in their historic and continuing struggle to materialize their dream to 'accede to Pakistan.' While paying tributes to the sacrifices of Kashmiri, he said that Pakistan will continue to extend political, moral, and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris facing the 'brutal' and 'illegal actions' of the 'Hindutva supremacist' Indian government.

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

Kashmir has entered into a decisive phase: 'AJK' president

Mahasib, 21 July 2022

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry said that since the issue of Kashmir has entered into a 'decisive phase' there was a dire need to appraise the world community about the early resolution of the longstanding issue that happens to be the main cause and consequence of 'human rights

violations' in the region. While talking to Malik Nadeem Abid (ambassador and secretary general of the International human right commission), Sultan referred to the 'worsening' political and 'human rights' situation in the 'Indian occupied Kashmir', and said that there is an urgent need to raise a strong voice against the 'human rights violations' being committed by the 'Indian army' deployed in the 'Indian occupied' Jammu and Kashmir. He said that after stripping the region of its special status, the Indian government led by PM Narendra Modi has started 'changing' the demography of the 'occupied territory' by settling non-Kashmiris in the territory by issuing 'fake domiciles' to over 400,000 non-state Hindus. He further said that by redrawing the electoral maps, the Indian government wants to install a Hindu chief minister in the 'occupied state.' He further said that we need to raise our voice in front of the international community in an effective manner to stop India's 'ruthless suppression' of dissent in the region including the 'unjust' sentencing of Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik. Malik Nadeem briefed the president on his efforts to highlight the Kashmir issue in the United Nations and invited the 'AJK' president to participate in the upcoming Kashmir Conference to be held in New York in December, this year.

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

‘AJK’ PM statement regarding recognition of Israel is an open insult to the martyrs of Kashmir and the Quaid-e-Azam: Religious leaders

Urdupoint, 22 July 2022

The patron members of Palestine Foundation Pakistan and National Unity Council president Allama Sahibzada, Jamaat-e-Islami leader, Liaquat Baloch, Leader of Pakistan Muslim League, Sardar Rahim, Majlis Wahdat Muslim Pakistan Chairman Allama Nasir Abbas Jafri, Pakistan Awami Tehreek leader Khuram Nawaz, Jamia Naeemia Lahore chief Mufti Raghob, head of All Pakistan Sunni Tehreek, Shabar Raza, leader of Jafaria Alliance Pakistan, Mirza Yusuf Hussain, Ameen Ansari founder of Muttahida Ulema Mahaz and numerous other religious, human rights activists and political parties' leaders in a joint statement, expressed their anger and protested against the Prime Minister of 'Azad Kashmir', Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan regarding his statement on the recognition of Israel.

They said that PM Ilyas's statement is an open insult to the martyrs of Kashmir and the Quaid-e-Azam. They said that on the one hand, Hurriyat activists are engaged in the freedom struggle in 'occupied Kashmir', on the other hand, Sardar Tanveer, who is the PM of 'Azad Kashmir' is more concerned about Pakistan's relations with Israel than Kashmir. They appealed to the chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and former PM Imran

Khan, to carry out the process of 'purification' in his party and throw out the black sheep. They said that the PM of 'Azad Kashmir' should be expelled from the party immediately and noted that Sardar Tanveer's advocacy in favor of Israel is a shameful act. They further said that problem of Palestine is not the problem of a few Arab states, but the problem of the entire Muslim Ummah and humanity as a whole. The religious leaders said that the PM of 'Azad Kashmir' should have been the advocate of Kashmir and the First Qibla (referred to as masjid Aqsa), but unfortunately, he is advocating for Israel, the killer of Palestinians. The leaders demanded and urged the president of Pakistan and the PM of Pakistan along with the army chief to take strict action against the elements who mock the constitution of Pakistan and the founder of Pakistan by talking about relations with Israel and added that the elements supporting Israel will not be forgiven in Pakistan.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/karachi/important-news/live-news-3211285.html>

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Disclaimer

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