

# Weekly POK News Digest

*(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)*

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**Babuser top tunnel**  
**POK environment**  
**health facilities** **Gilgit-Baltistan**  
**power generation**  
**Diamer-Bhasha** **Green Fund**  
**Islamic Development Bank**



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## Political Developments

### **'AJK president meets OIC secretary-general at Jeddah**

*Daily Parliament Times, April 11, 2022*

The president of "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" (AJK), Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry during his visit to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), headquarters in Jeddah urged the OIC secretary-general, Hussain Ibrahim Taha, to use "his good office to implement Kashmir action plan", which was "agreed upon" during the OIC's foreign ministers' conference and Kashmir Contact Group meeting in Islamabad last month. During the meeting with the OIC secretary-general, 'AJK' president sought the "Muslim body's proactive role" in resolving the "Kashmir dispute" in line with the universally accepted "principle of the right to self-determination." Sultan Mehmood said that the "massive troop concentration in the Indian occupied Kashmir" has led to "widespread violence and human rights violations" in the region.

He further said that in presence of 900 000 troops, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) led government is "advancing its Hindutva ideology in occupied Kashmir." He also said that through its "settler-colonial policies", "India is changing the demographics of Kashmir" like the "Israel has been doing in Palestine by settling non-Palestinians." He also said that India had issued "fake domiciles to 4.2 million non-state Hindus" with the "intention to change the proportion of

the population in the region." He stressed that under the given circumstances, there is a "dire need that the OIC must intensify its efforts to resolve the Kashmir issue" that has been the major cause and consequence of "violence in the region." While referring to the OIC charter, Sultan Choudhary said that "since the OIC charter affirms Kashmiris' and Palestinians' inalienable right, the right to self-determination, the OIC must play its role in granting Kashmiris their birthright." The OIC secretary-general Hussain Ibrahim Taha said that the "Muslim body besides supporting the Kashmiris' right of self-determination" has "been consistently raising its voice against the Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir." The 'AJK' president also invited the OIC secretary-general, Hussain Ibrahim Taha, to visit "Azad Kashmir" and thanked the OIC secretary-general for appointing him as "special representative on Kashmir."

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/04/11/ajk-president-meets-oic-secretary-general-at-jeddah/>

### **Kashmir, Pakistan Inseparable: 'AJK' President**

*The Nation, April 11, 2022*

The president of "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhary has said that "Pakistan is incomplete without Kashmir" and stressed the valley has its "identity rooted in Pakistan, the two are inseparable." While interacting with Jeddah-based representatives of the

Jammu and Kashmir overseas community, headed by Masood Ahmad Puri, and Kashmir committee Jeddah headed by Chaudhry Khurshid Matial urged the international community to call upon “Indian occupation forces to cease violence and bloodshed in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).” He said that the voice of the “Kashmiri people would never be suppressed” as the next “generation of Kashmiris has taken it upon themselves to secure their freedom from Indian oppression.” He appreciated the services of the Kashmiri diaspora, both within Saudi Arabia as well as other parts of the world for keeping the “Kashmir issue alive.”

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/04/11/kashmir-pakistan-inseparable-ajk-president/>

### **‘AJK’ president returns home after concluding his 4-day visit to Saudi Arabia**

*Daily Parliament Times, April 15, 2022*

The president of “Azad Jammu and Kashmir” (AJK), Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry reached Islamabad after concluding his four-day visit to Saudi Arabia. During his visit, he had “productive meetings and interactions with Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), secretary-general Hussain Ibrahim Taha, president of Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Dr Muhammad Sulaiman Al Jasser, ambassador Tariq Ali Bakhit and other senior Saudi officials. Besides highlighting the “Kashmir issue”, the ‘AJK’ president also briefed the IDB

president regarding the ongoing projects and future projects in “Azad Kashmir.” He also attended and addressed Iftar dinners hosted in his honour by OIC secretary-general, Hussein Ibrahim Taha and Pakistan’s Permanent Representative (PPR) to the OIC Mr Rizwan Syed Sheikh. He urged the Kashmiri community settled in Saudi Arabia to rise above their “party affiliations to galvanize support for the Kashmir cause in the middle-eastern countries.” He also urged the international community to “shun its policy of indifference towards Kashmir” and play its much-needed role to resolve the “long-drawn Kashmir conflict”, which he said was the “main cause and consequence of tension and violence in the region.”

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/04/15/ajk-president-returns-home-after-concluding-his-4-day-visit-to-saudi-arabia/>

### **‘AJK’ PM Abdul Qayyum Niazi Resigns**

*The Nation, April 15, 2022*

The Prime Minister (PM) of “Azad Jammu and Kashmir” (AJK), Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi resigned from his office, and he was replaced by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) regional president Sardar Tanveer Ilyas through a vote of no-confidence. Qayyum Niazi was to face a vote of no confidence after 25 members of the PTI parliamentary party had moved a resolution to this effect against him under Article 18 of the ‘AJK’ constitution. It may be noted that PM Abdul Qayyum Niazi had removed five of his ministers from the

ministry before his resignation. He excluded five ministers from the cabinet due to misconduct, corruption and suspicious activities. The removed ministers include Tanveer Ilyas, Abdul Majid Khan, Ali Shan Soni, Khawaja Farooq and Akbar Ibrahim.

<https://nation.com.pk/2022/04/15/ajk-pm-abdul-qayyum-niazi-resigns/>

## **Economic Developments**

### **'AJK' president seeks IDB's assistance in combating environmental problems in 'AJK'**

*Daily Parliament Times, April 13, 2022*

The president of "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" (AJK), Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry sought Islamic Development Bank's (IDBs) assistance in "combating environmental problems" in 'AJK.' During a meeting with the IDB president Dr Muhammad Sulaiman Al Jassar, Sultan Mehmood told him that the deforestation and degradation of forests in 'AJK' were posing "serious environmental problems." While expecting IDB's assistance under Green Fund and Global Fund, he urged the IDB chief to provide necessary support and assistance to the government of 'AJK' to deal with these problems. He also said that the IDB should provide "assistance and support in the field of agriculture", adding that the "Islamic Bank" should also grant scholarships to students studying in different universities of AJK. He further stressed that in the same way, "the universities

of the Muslim countries should come forward in a big way and allocate funds that besides enhancing the capacity of our universities, it would also be instrumental in eliminating unemployment in the region." While highlighting the "plight of people living in villages adjacent to the Line of Control" (LoC), 'AJK' president said that the IDB should play its role in "alleviating the sufferings of the people settled in these highly volatile areas."

During the occasion, the IDB president "assured his full support and cooperation" to the 'AJK' president and assured that the Bank would provide its full support and assistance for the development of "Azad Kashmir." He further said that after the 2005 earthquake the IDB was asked to construct school buildings, some of which were completed while some were yet to be completed. He said that a further 15 million dollars have been earmarked for the construction of the remaining schools. Sultan Mehmood also invited the president to visit "Azad Kashmir." The IDB president, Dr Muhammad Sulaiman Al-Jasser, has also been the former ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan. Furthermore, the OIC secretary-general, Hussain Ibrahim Taha hosted a dinner in honour of Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry, which was attended by a "large number of ambassadors" hailing from different Islamic countries.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/04/13/barrister-sultan-seeks-idbs-assistance-in-combating-environmental-problems-in-ajk/>

## **‘Diamer Bhasha Dam a lifeline for Country Economy:’ PM Shehbaz Sharif**

*Daily Parliament Times, April 17, 2022*

The Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said that the completion of the Diamer-Bhasha dam would serve as a future lifeline for the country's economy, augmenting the power generation, besides boosting agriculture activities. While speaking after a briefing over the construction of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam, the PM said that the 4500 Mega Watt (MW) project was of immense importance for the country's economy and stressed to “go ahead of its timeline of 2029 and complete it by 2026-27, added that it will be a miracle, if we achieve it, stressed that we can achieve it if we advance in unison.”

The PM said that the project was initiated by former PM Nawaz Sharif in 2016 and funds were provided by the Pakistan Muslim League (N) (PML-N) government for the land acquisition. He assured all-out support from the federal government to complete the project as early as possible. He also suggested encouraging international investors for future fundraising. The PM also announced the construction of a 13 km Babusar top tunnel to ensure year round traffic flow and asked the authorities to submit a study report to his office. He said that what happened during the last four years was unfortunate and regretted that out of 125-130 Million Acre-Foot (MAF)

water, they were only saving and utilizing 25-30 MAF water annually.

The PM stressed that it would be a big success if they saved water and ensure that the Diamer-Bhasha dam would play a vital role in water storage capacity, and added that it would save the Tarbela dam from deposits of sediments and enhance its life span by 35 years. He noted that the dam would control flash floods, enhance agricultural productivity, besides create jobs opportunities in the area, leading to economic prosperity. The PM said that he would not go into the past four years, but what happened with the power sector was indeed an injustice to the nation and maintained that despite a power generation capacity of about 6000-7000 MW, the gas-fired and oil run power plants had been shut.

While stressing that the area lacked health facilities, he said that as a former chief minister of Punjab, he had donated a scanning machine to Gilgit. He directed the authorities to submit a report within a week for the construction of a fully equipped hospital in the area to provide the latest health facilities to the local population. During the occasion, the chairman of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), Muzamil Hussain briefed the PM on the ongoing project. The WAPDA chairman apprised that three mega hydel projects Diamer-Bhasha, Mohmand and Dasu dams worth 2.6 trillion were being completed. He said the Diamer-Bhasha

dam would have a storage capacity of 8.1 MAF with live storage of 6.4 MAF and can irrigate 1.23 million acres of land. It will generate 18,100 Gigawatt hours (GWh) of power annually. After the WAPDA chairman's briefing, the PM also took an aerial review of Karakorum Highway, the 3 MW Thuk power project and Chilas Cadet College.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2022/04/17/diAmer-bhasha-dam-a-lifeline-for-country-economy-pm/>

### **From Vernacular Urdu Media**

#### **'AJK' PM directed to complete the reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell soon**

*UrduPoint, April 11, 2022*

The Prime Minister (PM) of "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" (AJK), Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi has given direction to complete the "reorganization of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell (JKLC) as soon as possible." The JKLC to be renamed as Kashmir Liberation Commission (KLC); that would be "an institution free from political recruitment, will be used purely for the independence movement of Kashmir" (said by AJK PM). It has been said that the services of experts and observers will also be sought in the "Liberation Commission" (LC). LC "will act as an effective and vibrant think tank for the Tehreek-e-Azadi Kashmir." It has been noted that a "high-level meeting" was held under the chairmanship of 'AJK-PM' Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi regarding the

reorganization of liberation cell. The meeting was attended by the chief secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, secretary LC Ejaz Hussain Lone, principal secretary Ehsan Khalid Kayani and other concerned officials. During the meeting, the PM was given a "detailed briefing on the reorganization of Liberation Cell" and the steps taken so far. While addressing the meeting, Abdul Qayyum Niazi said that "this cell was created for Kashmir cause;" and added, "we will use it for the same purpose." He further observed that "instead of fulfilling the purpose for which it was set up, it has unfortunately turned into a political recruitment agency". He said that the base camp government will fulfil its responsibility concerning the "Kashmir independence movement" and KLC will "expose India's atrocities in occupied Kashmir."

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/kashmir/live-news-3096892.html>

#### **'No-trust motion against PM Qayyum Niazi tabled in AJK parliament'**

*UrduPoint, April 12, 2022*

A no-confidence motion was tabled in "Azad Jammu Kashmir" (AJK) Legislative Assembly against the Prime Minister (PM) Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) led incumbent government in 'AJK. The 'AJK' Legislative Assembly speaker, Anwar ul Haq has summoned the house to meet in the state metropolis Muzaffarabad on "April 15 for further proceeding in this direction." It has been reported that

there are total 25 signatories of the no-confidence motion which is tabled under article 18 of the 1974 interim constitution Act of 'AJK'. The motion framed some "serious charges" primarily against the PM Qayyum Niazi, the hand-pick PM of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) supremo and former PM Imran Khan. The PM Qayyum has been accused of nepotism, lack of good governance, indulging in malpractices, irregularities, ruining merit, "not highlighting Kashmir issue at relevant forums", categorically defying the manifesto of PTI and so on.

The movers of the motion in LA proved that Sardar Qayyum Niazi has lost the confidence of "the majority of the house." They proposed member of the assembly and sitting senior minister Sardar Tanveer Illayas as successor, the new leader of the house in the 'AJK-LA.' A total of 27 members of the 53, 'AJK-LA' is required to submit the no-trust motion against the sitting leader of the house. The signatories to the no-trust motion included Abdul Majid Khan, Muhammad Akber, Ch Imtiaz Naseem, Tanvir Illayas, Shahida Muneer, Ali Shan Soni, Javed Butt, Rafique Nayyer, Nisaar Ansar, Malik Zaffar, Ch. Ikhlaq, Yasir Sultan, Ch. Arshad Hussain, Faheem Rubani, Muhammad Rasheed, Riaz Ahmed, Maqbool Ahmed, Sardar Muhammad Hussain, Taqdees Gillani, Khawaja Farooq Ahmed, Muhammad Mazher Shah, Muhammad Iqbal, Azher Sadiq, Dewan Ali Khan, Ch. Akmal Sargala.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/important-news/live-news-3097243.html>

### **'AJK' president urges Kashmiri expatriates to get united to promote Kashmir cause**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, April 13, 2022*

The president of "Azad Kashmir", Sultan Mehmood Chaudhary has said that "Kashmiris at home and abroad should unite to highlight the Kashmir issue" efficiently at the international level. The 'AJK' president said this while addressing a meeting arranged by the Pakistani Consulate General in Jeddah Mr Khalid Majeed. The meeting was attended by "prominent Kashmiris" based in Saudi Arabia. During the occasion, Saltan Chaudhary said there was a "dire need that Kashmiris should get united" at all levels to "expose India's expansionist designs in the region."

He said that "India was hell-bent on grabbing the territory of Jammu and Kashmir" which is considered a "disputed territory." The 'AJK' president said that he had taken several initiatives to bring world's attention on Kashmir ranging from organizing solidarity rallies in Islamabad and Muzaffarabad as a part of the campaign to divert world attention towards the "simmering situation in the Indian occupied Kashmir (IOK)." He said that given the "volatile situation" in the 'IOK' there was a 'dire need to raise the voice' at every forum and sensitize the international community about the early resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Resize-of-front-page-jktimes-add.jpg>



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## Disclaimer

*PoK weekly 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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