

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

Volume 3 | Issue 30

24 July - 30 July 2023

Mangla Dam
CPEC
POK tourism
hydropower
Gilgit-Baltistan



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES
मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Contents

Political Developments

- 'IIOJK' continues to reel under brutal 'Indian occupation'
- Another step towards Hinduization of 'IIOJK'
- 'Godi Media' out to defame KMS for exposing Modi regime's fascism in 'IIOJK', elsewhere
- Body of missing Indian woman found in GB's Kharmang district: Official
- Around 30,000, mostly outsiders were recruited in 'IIOJK' after Article 370 abrogation
- Pasban-e-Hurriyat appeals to the masses to participate in the 5th August Protest
- 'AJK' leadership concerned over 'IIOJK' human rights situation
- 'AJK' president says all political parties within & outside AJK should join hands to promote the Kashmir cause

Economic Developments

- Mangla Dam nears maximum capacity amidst heavy rains in 'AJK'
- Tarar vows to ease G-B energy woes
- ICCI to play a role in tapping investment potential in GB
- ICT-led human development: A lesson from G-B's success story
- Chinese authority approves 60 more GB orchards for Cherry export to China
- Xinjiang and Gilgit Baltistan Customs deepen trade cooperation

Vernacular Urdu Media

- India will not be able to hold Kashmiris in captivity for very long: JI leader
- The Kashmiri people are fighting for their country's independence from Indian rule: Mehmood Sagar
- Pakistan Foreign Office slams Indian defense minister's provocative remarks
- Gilgit-Baltistan will hold local elections for the first time in 18 years: Chief election commissioner

Political Developments

'IIOJK' continues to reel under brutal 'Indian occupation'

Pakistan Observer, 24 July 2023

According to a report released by Kashmir Media Service, Indian troops have turned 'IIOJK' into a living hell for its residents as Kashmiris of every age and gender are being mercilessly killed, tortured, and humiliated for demanding their right to self-determination. It said the Modi regime has broken all records of committing brutalities on the Kashmiri people. It said Indian troops have been violating all rights, including the right to live, in 'IIOJK' for over seven decades. Eight youths have been martyred by Indian troops since Monday and over 96, 213 Kashmiris have been killed and 168,009 arrested since 1989 in the 'occupied territory', the report deplored. The report maintained that the presence of nearly one million Indian troops had made 'IIOJK' the most militarized zone in the world.

<https://pakobserver.net/iiojk-continues-to-reel-under-brutal-indian-occupation/>

Another step towards Hinduization of 'IIOJK'

Pakistan Observer, 25 July 2023

In another step towards Hinduization of 'Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK), the Modi-led Indian government is moving to amend the so-called J&K Reorganisation Act

2019 to reserve three more seats in the territory's Legislative Assembly for Kashmiri Hindu migrants. Two seats will be reserved for those Hindu Pandits who migrated from the Valley and one for those who left for 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) at the time of partition and settled in different parts of the 'occupied territory', intending to further consolidate New Delhi's position in the 'IIOJK' assembly, and to install a Hindu chief minister in the Muslim dominated region in future. The Modi regime through its delimitation commission has already given six more seats to Hindu dominated Jammu region and only one to the Muslim majority Kashmir valley even though the population of Jammu is less than that of the valley.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023, will be tabled in the Lok Sabha very soon. After the recent delimitation process, the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of 'IIOJK' has gone up from 107 to 114, with nine seats reserved for Scheduled Tribes. On the seat reserved for 'Kashmiri Migrants', the amended Bill says that the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir may nominate not more than two members, one of whom shall be a woman, from the community of Kashmiri Migrants to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

<https://pakobserver.net/another-step-towards-hinduization-of-iiojk/>

‘Godi Media’ out to defame KMS for exposing Modi regime’s fascism in ‘IIOJK’, elsewhere

Pakistan Observer, 26 July 2023

After being fully exposed internationally for its naked fascism in ‘occupied Jammu and Kashmir’ (OJK) and towards minorities inside India particularly in Manipur, the Modi regime has stooped too low to use its ‘Godi’ media to spread propaganda against Kashmir Media Service (KMS). According to KMS, at the behest of the BJP government, an Indian television channel, News 18, in its recent pack of lies waged propaganda against a well-reputed, credible, and authentic news agency KMS. The only reason is that the KMS has on every occasion exposed India for its anti-Pakistan conspiracies, be it Disinfo Lab or G20 huddle in Srinagar under the euphemism of tourism promotion. What India under Modi could not stomach is the back-to-back failure of its efforts to make the G20 meeting in Srinagar a success thanks to the projection of the disputed status of Jammu and Kashmir and also the worst record of India's human rights in the ‘occupied territory.’ Besides, the way the KMS covered the naked parade of Christian women by the Hindu majority tribe in Manipur and revealed the true fascist face of BJP rule in India before the international community has unnerved the Modi regime and its paid media like News 18.

It is worth mentioning here that News 18 had been fined Rs 50,000 in October 2022 for its fake news coverage. On the other hand, KMS has been projecting Indian brutalities on innocent people of ‘IIOJK’ and is highlighting human rights violations by Indian troops in the ‘occupied territory.’ The KMS publishes reports based on facts and figures, but the Indian media has, off and on, waged venomous propaganda against KMS. On 6 September 2021, on the custodial killing of Syed Ali Gilani, the then Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, in his news conference raised the hue and cry against KMS for unveiling the Indian government's secret burial of Syed Ali Gilani that created ripples in ‘IIOJK.’ In June 2021, the Indian government and its media also criticized KMS's international webinar in which more than 10 UK MPs participated on the topic 'The Resolution of Kashmir Dispute, Challenges and Response'. To counter KMS, Indian authorities in ‘IIOJK’ launched a website SKIMS — Kashmir Independent Media Service (www.kimskashmir.com). It’s a replica of KMS. Indian authorities also launched J&K Counter Disinformation Centre (JKCDC) (https://twitter.com/JKCDC_) to tackle KMS data.

<https://pakobserver.net/godi-media-out-to-defame-kms-for-exposing-modi-regimes-fascism-in-iiojk-elsewhere/>

Body of missing Indian woman found in GB's Kharmang district: official

Dawn, 26 July 2023

The body of a 28-year-old woman, who had gone missing in the 'Indian-controlled' area of Kargil, was found in Gilgit-Baltistan's (GB) Kharmang district on Wednesday, according to Deputy Commissioner (DC) Muhammad Jaffar. Jaffar told Dawn.com that the woman's body was retrieved from the Kargil River today and buried in Kharmang. He said the body could be returned to India after contact between the foreign ministries of the countries, once the woman's identity was confirmed through DNA testing. Meanwhile, Qasim, a resident of Kharmang, said the funeral prayer of the woman had been offered and the burial was performed according to Islamic rituals. Earlier, a pamphlet featuring the image of the woman was circulated by the Kargil police station from the Indian side. The pamphlet was also sent to the GB administration for the recovery of the body.

The pamphlet stated that the woman, identified as Belqees Banoo, was five feet tall and clad in green clothes along with a red sweater. Baltistan Awami Action Committee Chairman Najaf Ali, in a statement, said that due to the closure of the old Skardu-Kargil road, people in the surrounding areas of the Line of Control faced severe difficulties in such situations. He called for the re-

establishment of historical routes to facilitate locals in both countries.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1766929/body-of-missing-indian-woman-found-in-gbs-kharmang-district-official>

Around 30,000, mostly outsiders were recruited in 'IIOJK' after Article 370 abrogation

Pakistan Observer, 27 July 2023

Among several other anti-Kashmiris' measures, which India took post-August 2019 to effect a demographic change on a fast track in 'Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) 'accelerated recruitment' of thousands of outsiders to replace local employees is one, as the Modi regime on Wednesday confirmed that a total of 29,295 people were recruited since the abrogation of Article 370 in the territory. According to Kashmir Media Service, the Modi government made the confirmation in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian parliament, today. Indian Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai shared it in a written reply to a member. He said the administration in 'Jammu and Kashmir has carried out several governance reforms, including in the area of recruitment in Government.'

He further added that 'after the abrogation of Article 370, a large-scale recruitment drive has been carried out and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has filled 29,295 vacancies.'

Not only this, the minister added that 'the identification of vacancies in the Government and recruitment is a continuous and ongoing process.' The experts have a firm belief that the termination of local Kashmiri employees from government jobs on one pretext or another is part of the 'accelerated recruitment drive', which the minister has indicated. It is worth mentioning here that many Kashmiri government employees have been shown the door on the charge of posting and sharing some pro-freedom content even many years back.

<https://pakobserver.net/around-30000-mostly-outsiders-recruited-in-iiojk-after-article-370-abrogation/>

Pasban-e-Hurriyat appeals to the masses to participate in the 5th August Protest

Daily Parliament Times, 26 July 2023

The Chairman Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir Uzair Ahmed Ghazali have said that India's exploitative actions of 5 August 2019 in the 'occupied state' are the worst attack on the basic human rights of the Kashmiri people. He appealed to the masses to participate in anti-India protests across the state on 5 August saying that on 5 August 2019, India attacked the people of the state by unilaterally abrogating Articles 370 and 35A. All the basic human, social, political, and religious rights of the

Kashmiri people were taken away by military force after 5th August 2019, he claimed. Vice Chairman Usman Ali Hashim said that it has been four years since Indian brutal actions, but the people of Jammu and Kashmir have not recognized Indian military rule even for a moment.

He claimed that the Kashmiri people are fighting unprecedentedly for their freedom and right to self-determination and that every citizen should raise their voices against Indian colonial tactics. They appealed to people living all over the world and particularly to people of the capital of base camp to raise the black flag and protest in front of the United Nations observers on 5 August and demand the right of self-determination for the political future of the state.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/07/26/peh-appeals-masses-to-participate-in-5th-august-protest/>

'AJK' leadership concerned over 'IIOJK' human rights situation

Pakistan Today, 28 July 2023

The prime minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq and President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has expressed deep concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu Kashmir' (IIOJK). In a meeting held in Mirpur, both leaders discussed mutual

interests, regional developments, and the continued oppression faced by religious minorities in India. They particularly highlighted the brutal treatment of the Christian community in Manipur, stating that, in addition to the suppression of Muslims in 'occupied Kashmir' and Sikhs and Muslims in Gujarat and Punjab, Hindutva forces were now targeting the Christian community in Manipur. They termed this oppression of religious minorities as a severe form of state terrorism and called on the international community to take notice of these atrocities in India. They expressed grave concern over the 'ongoing violence and bloodshed' in Jammu and Kashmir and urged the world community to stop turning a blind eye to the plight of the Kashmiri people and take necessary actions to address the human rights violations in the region.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1117958/ajk-leadership-concerned-over-iiojk-human-rights-situation/>

'AJK' president says all political parties within and outside AJK should join hands to promote the Kashmir cause

Daily Parliament Times, 30 July 2023

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that all the political parties within and outside 'Azad Kashmir' should join their hands to promote the Kashmir cause and

galvanize world support in favor of the Kashmiris' right to self-determination. While talking to a delegation of Jammāt Islami-(JI) 'Azad Kashmir', led by JI Amir Dr. Muhammad Mushtaq Khan, Sultan Mahmood claimed that following the worsening political and human rights situation in the 'Indian occupied' territory of Jammu and Kashmir, all political parties inside and outside the country should work together and redouble their efforts to resolve the issue of Kashmir. While appreciating the JI's role and contribution to the ongoing freedom movement in Kashmir, the president said that the JI has always played its role to highlight the Kashmir issue effectively and strongly. He said that given the highly volatile situation in the region, there was a dire need to apprise the international community about the importance of an early and amicable solution to the Kashmir dispute in line with the UNSC resolutions.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/07/30/president-ajk-says-all-political-parties-within-outside-ajk-should-join-their-hands-to-promote-kashmir-cause/>

Economic Developments

Mangla Dam nears maximum capacity amidst heavy rains in 'AJK'

The Nation, 24 July 2023

The water level at Mangla Dam has risen to 1214.95 feet due to continuous heavy rains and glacial melting in the

Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir. The water level was approaching its maximum conservation level of 1242 feet, with a live storage capacity of 5.329 million acre-feet (MAF). The authorities are closely monitoring the situation and taking necessary measures to manage the water levels in the reservoirs to prevent any potential flooding. The inflows and outflows of the rivers have been recorded over 24 hours, while other flows were gauged at 6:00 am on Sunday.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/24-Jul-2023/mangla-dam-nears-maximum-capacity-amidst-heavy-rains-in-ajk>

Tarar vows to ease G-B energy woes

Dawn, 25 July 2023

In a bid to alleviate the difficulties faced by the people of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and fully harness the region's vast resources for their benefit, federal law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar has committed to extending comprehensive support and cooperation of the federal government. Tarar reiterated this pledge during a pivotal meeting that he chaired to finalize the power generation policy for the region. The crucial gathering saw the presence of prominent stakeholders, including the advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and GB, Qamar Zaman Kaira,

representatives from the power division, and the law and justice division secretary. During the discussion, participants put forth ideas to bridge the existing demand and supply gap in the region. A key point of discussion was the attraction of investment in the energy sector and unlocking the full potential of GB's resources for the benefit of its people. To achieve this goal, the federal government intends to extend the Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) Act and the Power Policy of 2015 to the region. The GB government would move a summary on this matter to its line ministry. By enhancing the power policy and fostering investment in the energy sector, the federal government aims to bolster the socio-economic landscape of the region and improve the overall quality of life for its residents.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2427745/tarar-vows-to-ease-g-b-energy-woes>

ICCI to play a role in tapping investment potential in GB

Daily Times, 26 July 2023

President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the importance of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) has increased due to China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as this mega development project will usher in

a new era of development and prosperity in the province. Zafar said that the province should consider providing more attractive incentives to investors, especially in the tourism sector, so that high-quality hotels, roads, and other infrastructures in the area could be developed on modern lines that will attract tourists from all over the world to the region. Bakhtawari said that ICCI had recently organized a successful tourism summit in Skardu intending to highlight the tourism potential of the region for the business community and foreign diplomats. He assured that ICCI would cooperate with the GB government in promoting investment in tourism and other sectors in the province. He said that by introducing minerals, dry fruits, and other products of GB in the international market, Pakistan's exports can be increased substantially.

Meanwhile, SSP Zahoor Ahmed while briefing investment opportunities in the province said that GB has a great potential to generate 40,000 megawatts of hydropower. Apart from this, the province also has attractive business and investment opportunities in tourism, minerals, agriculture, and dry fruit sectors, so ICCI members should try to take full advantage of such opportunities, he added. He said that modern technology and capital are needed to explore minerals and precious stones in GB, so the private

sector should bring technology and capital, while the provincial government will give them all possible support in this regard. He said that ICCI should bring a delegation to GB to explore the business and investment possibilities in the province. He assured that he will help the delegation to meet with the Chief Minister and other high officials.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1117271/icci-to-play-role-for-tapping-investment-potential-in-gb/>

ICT-led human development: A lesson from G-B's success story

The Express Tribune, 26 July 2023

In recent years, many people have noticed an unending stream of good news coming from Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B). The region has seen development in smart schools, Information Communication and Technology (ICT)-led pedagogical transformation, digital libraries, Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and student-led entrepreneurship, including the revival of school meals programmes and student health check-ups. The focus of the latest round of reforms in GB is on the right path, just as the heart and dedication of those driving this ambitious agenda seem to be in the right place. They are investing in future generations by boosting students' academic and technology-driven skills, infusing confidence with the help of cutting-edge, globally

acknowledged technology skill sets, and looking after their health and general well-being.

All of this has been happening in GB in the context of Pakistan's not-so-successful public sector reform experience in recent years. A large number of governance and service delivery reform initiatives were launched in Pakistan, covering education, health, ICT, service delivery, and decentralisation sectors. In most of these interventions, bilateral and multi-lateral development partners were also key stakeholders, both as funding conduits and in terms of providing a reform roadmap. In the case of G-B, there was a palpable consensus among key stakeholders – politicians, administrative leads, and managers in the technical sectors – around what reforms should be rolled out on a priority basis and what trajectory such reform implementation would follow. For instance, the 'smart classroom' initiative spread across G-B's schools with promising results.

The project included sophisticated and state-of-the-art IT software parks, provision of chrome books and offline-online Learning Management Systems (LMS), digital libraries, maker space labs with robotic systems, 3D printers and electronic kits, tech fellowships, and STEM entrepreneurship by highly qualified outsourced faculty. The G-B

government has already designed and rolled out six-month intensive training courses in highly employable and high-earning courses such as data science, artificial intelligence (AI), and block-chain. For the rollout of these capacity-building courses, services of one of Pakistan's highly acclaimed engineering universities, NUST, have been hired for an estimated 400 participants already.

<https://tribune.com.pk/article/97727/ict-led-human-development-a-lesson-from-g-bs-success-story>

Chinese authority approves 60 more GB orchards for Cherry export to China

Pakistan Today, 27 July 2023

The General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) has approved 60 more orchards from Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) for cherry export to China, Commercial Counsellor at Pakistani Embassy Ghulam Qadir stated. According to China Economic Net (CEN), Ghulam Qadir said that approval of the Pakistani cherry orchards by Chinese customs holds significant potential for the agricultural sector in GB, where cherry cultivation is a prominent industry. The endorsement by Chinese customs signifies that the cherries from Pakistan meet the required standards and regulations for export to China. This

not only opens up new avenues for trade but also showcases the quality and taste of Pakistani cherries to a wider international market, he added. Arman Shah, CEO of Hashwan Group and Arman Shah Farm, which is the largest farm approved by Chinese Customs told CEN that the collaboration between China and Pakistan in promoting agricultural exports, particularly cherries from GB, highlights the mutual benefits derived from such partnerships. It not only boosts economic growth but also strengthens bilateral ties. He further told that GB cherries have already been exported to other countries with the major market being the Middle East, adding that this year the price of export was between Rs. 700-1000 per kg.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/07/27/chinese-authority-approves-60-more-gb-orchards-for-cherry-export-to-china/>

Xinjiang and Gilgit Baltistan Customs deepen trade cooperation

The Nation, 27 July 2023

The customs authorities of Xinjiang, China, and Gilgit Baltistan (GB), Pakistan held an online meeting to discuss and strengthen trade cooperation between the two regions and explore new avenues for economic collaboration. Hao Weiming, Director General of Urumqi Customs, led the meeting from the Chinese side while Syed Fawad Ali Shah, head of the

Customs Administration of the GB, represented the Pakistani side. In their opening remarks, they said, China and Pakistan have long enjoyed a close partnership in various sectors, including trade. The customs departments of Xinjiang and GB play a crucial role in facilitating smooth cross-border trade between the two countries. During the meeting, officials from both sides discussed measures to streamline customs procedures, improve border infrastructure, and enhance information sharing. These efforts are aimed at promoting efficient trade facilitation and ensuring the smooth movement of goods across the China-Pakistan border. Chinese side told that in 2022 total value of imports and export from Xinjiang to Pakistan was RMB 2.92 billion, an increase of 248.2 percent year on year while in the first half of this year, the import and export from Xinjiang to Pakistan was RMB 1.90 billion, a year-on-year increase of 247.8 percent.

Syed Fawad Ali Shah, head of the Customs Administration of the GB, said that Pakistan wants to further deepen collaboration with China in diverse fields, particularly in the field of technology, and speed up customs clearness from both sides. He also mentioned that Xinjiang has a unique advantage and a role in the All-Weather strategy cooperative partnership between China and

Pakistan, all along the border customs of China and Pakistan, and maintaining communication and close cooperation in promoting the flow of trade at ports, facilitating the entry and exit of personnel and participating in international assistance. The meeting also provided an opportunity for stakeholders to exchange insights on emerging trends in international trade and explore potential areas for future collaboration.

Both parties expressed their commitment to deepening their cooperation to maximize the benefits of bilateral trade. It reinforces the importance of effective customs management in facilitating seamless cross-border transactions and promoting regional economic integration. China has become the largest trading partner of South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives, China's Vice Minister of Commerce Li Fei said. The annual trade volume between China and South Asian countries came in at under \$100 billion a decade ago, but the figure neared \$200 billion last year, representing an average annual increase of 8.3 percent, Li told a press conference here. About the China-South Asia Exposition set to take place from 16-20 August in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan Province, he said that the expo has become an important platform for economic and

trade cooperation between China and South Asian countries.

The upcoming expo, the seventh since 2013, will be held fully offline this year, Li said. Over 60 countries and regions have expressed the intention to participate in the expo so far, and nearly 1,000 enterprises are expected to attend the event. The expo will also host eight forums, including the fourth China-South Asia Cooperation Forum, and three other activities, including a signing ceremony for cooperation projects. This year's expo will feature the first South Asia tea festival to promote tea products and culture, and a digital platform that enables online conferencing, business discussions, and the signature of agreements.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jul-2023/xinjiang-and-gilgit-baltistan-customs-deepen-trade-cooperation>

From Vernacular Urdu Media

India will not be able to hold Kashmiris in captivity for very long: JI leader

Jasarat, 24 July 2023

The central deputy leader of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan, Liaqat Baloch, stated that the struggle for liberation in 'occupied Kashmir' is ongoing and that India has reached the end of its tyranny in the region. He also claimed that Modi's actions on 5 August have irreparably damaged the cause of

Kashmir. Baloch claimed that Kashmiris desire the freedom to decide their future and India will not be able to hold them as slaves for very long through coercion. He said that political instability currently affects Pakistan and that the opponent of Pakistan does not want a politically strong Pakistan, and political instability has contributed to economic instability. He claimed that there are plots against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and that to stop them, Pakistan and Afghanistan's relations must be strengthened and improved. He claimed that the election results will be detrimental to maintaining national harmony and that elections must be fair and transparent. Elections that are fair and impartial would bring Pakistani politics to a stable state. He stressed that for the sake of Kashmir, the base camp parties have to come together.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2023/07/23/liaqat-baloch-75/>

The Kashmiri people are fighting for their country's independence from Indian rule: Mehmood Sagar

Urdupoint, 26 July 2023

Mehmood Ahmed Sagar, the leader of the Hurriyat Conference's 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) branch, claimed that the reason why the people of 'occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (OJK) are fighting for their freedom

from Indian rule is that the Karbala incident taught us to fight against oppression, practice humanitarianism, and uphold the significance of Karbala. It imparts morals and the defence of human rights. Sagar claimed that the oppressed people of 'OJK' have been subject to brutality and tyranny, as well as sieges and arrests, particularly over the past seven decades. He alleged that India has restricted Muharram processions in the 'occupied territory' while making arrests through house raids. He asserted that Karbala serves as a reminder of the importance of waging a fierce battle against oppression and that all people who value freedom should learn from this conflict. He said that there have been problems for a long time in 'OJK' and Muslim processions and gatherings are also prohibited. He claimed that since 'OJK' lost its special status four years ago, India has multiplied its atrocities against the subjugated Kashmiris. He claimed that notwithstanding the horrors committed by the Indian Army, the Kashmiris are still engaged in a nonviolent struggle for their unalienable right to self-determination. How long will India keep repressing Kashmiris? The day when Kashmiris will achieve freedom and victory is not far off, he asserted.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/islamabad/kashmir/live-news-3666258.html>

Pakistan Foreign Office slams Indian defense minister's provocative remarks

Jasarat, 26 July 2023

The Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) criticized Rajnath Singh's provocative comments in Drass, Ladakh when he boasted of India's readiness to cross the Line of Control (LoC) and emphasized to the Indian government that Pakistan was completely capable of repelling any attack. The FO spokesperson in its statement said that we advise India to exercise the utmost caution as its aggressive language is a threat to regional peace and stability and aids in destabilizing the strategic environment in South Asia. The FO said that senior military personnel and political figures from India had previously expressed highly reckless opinions concerning Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), and added that they need to stop making jingoistic statements like this. While reminding India's leadership that Pakistan is fully capable of repelling any assault, the spokesperson added that it was time to stop using Pakistan to fuel India's hyper-nationalism and win political points in the country's populist public discourse.

India's claims on Jammu and Kashmir, an internationally recognised disputed area, are contradicted by everything from history to law and morality to the actual situation there. The relevant UN

Security Council resolutions provided that the ultimate decision on the territory would be made following the wishes of the people as expressed through the democratic process of a free and impartial plebiscite held under the supervision of the UN. Instead of harboring conceits of grandeur, the spokesperson exhorted India to faithfully implement these resolutions.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2023/07/26/foreign-ministry-4/>

Gilgit-Baltistan will hold local elections for the first time in 18 years: Chief election commissioner

Pamir Times, 27 July 2023

Raja Shahbaz Khan, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) for Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), has declared that the region's local body elections will take place during the first week of November. During a press conference, he stated that it would take 18 years for GB citizens to use their right to vote and choose their representatives at a local level. He claimed that the Local Bodies Act, 2014 has been in effect since 23 July with the backing of the government. He also stated that representatives from the Pakistani Election Commission would be invited to train the staff of the GB Election Commission, the local government department, and the revenue department on how to carry out the exercise.

<https://urdu.pamirtimes.net/2023/07/27/asd-2803/>

Social Media (tweets)

Safiullah Baig @SafiullahBaig14

20 July 2023

The colonial bureaucracy deliberately made LG redundant to exclude local people & take full control over colony called GB. The singular motive was to get rich through commissions & rents using security, sectarian divide, lack of capacity & of course loyalty as excuses.

<https://twitter.com/SafiullahBaig14/status/1682290935357665280>

Nisha Ghafar @Jn_Nietzsche000

21 July 2023

Executive supremacy/activism is going to affect GB in a long run. High time that GBA took complete control of the affairs of GB. Civil society needs to come forward. Who is CS to do extra executive works that actually must be the duty of local govt!

https://twitter.com/Jn_Nietzsche000/status/1682288023155924992

Yasir @yasirhunzai1

25 July 2023

Being a denizen of #GilgitBaltistan, #Pakistan, how you feel about #TwitterX showing location of this majestic rainbow mountain in #Indian held #Kashmir instead of #Yasin valley GilgitBaltistan? #TwitterX needs to address its #Geo-tagging of #GB.

<https://twitter.com/yasirhunzai1/status/1683745648850640896>

Gwadar Pro Official @Gwadar_Pro

26 July 2023

The customs authorities of Xinjiang, China, and Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan on Monday convened an online meeting to discuss and strengthen trade cooperation between the two regions and explore new avenues for economic collaboration.

Images link:

https://twitter.com/Gwadar_Pro/status/1684181494116552705

Iram S Khan @IramSKhan1

26 July 2023

Two news: 1. A girl from India came to Pakistan (KPK) and marry her lover 2. A dead body of a women floats from #Kargil to Kharmang (GB) and the body cannot be sent back because of border restrictions. Understand what it like is to belong to peripheries. #GilgitBaltistan

<https://twitter.com/IramSKhan1/status/1684232158846525440>

Altaf @asianhawk79

27 July 2023

How about this "government" stop kidnapping their own citizens = it's GHQ and it's civilian condoms nawaz zardari mafias that are dragging Pakistan name in the mud. Harming Kashmir freedom cause by not allowing GB legislatures into parliament.

<https://twitter.com/asianhawk79/status/1684419612169867264>

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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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