

Weekly POK News Digest

(A weekly news digest on Pakistan Occupied Kashmir)

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27 February - 05 March 2023

Skardu Airport
PSDP tourism programs POK
Gilgit-Baltistan power
Shagharthing outages
Road project Eastern
Highway



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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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Political Developments

APHC-'AJK' urges UN, Human Rights bodies to take notice of detainees' plight in jails

Pakistan today, 27 February 2023

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference 'Azad Kashmir and Kashmir' (APHC-AJK) chapter has urged the United Nations (UN) and other international human rights organizations to take notice of the plight of 'illegally detained' Hurriyat leaders and activists, languishing in the jails of 'occupied territory' and other parts of India. The convener of APHC-'AJK' Mehmood Ahmad Saghar in a statement issued in Islamabad claimed that 'illegally' detained Hurriyat leaders and activists were being deprived of medical facilities and adequate food besides access to lawyers. He said due to the non-provision of medical facilities during winter, Kashmiri detainees become sick. He said many Kashmiri political detainees are suffering from various disorders and reminded the UN Secretary-General that the long-pending Kashmiris' right to self-determination has been forgotten and the PM Modi regime is treating the people of Kashmir, especially the Muslims, like 'slaves.' Saghar said Kashmiri Muslims have no value in the eyes of Indian rulers and India has given no importance to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Convention, and even the UN

Human Rights Commission's 2018 and 2019 reports on Jammu and Kashmir.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/02/26/aphc-ajk-urges-un-other-world-hr-bodies-to-take-notice-of-detainees-plight-in-jails/>

'AJK' President salutes the PAF for their brave response against India

Daily Parliament Times, 27 February 2023

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, claimed that 27 February was their surprise day because India attacked 'Azad Kashmir' on 24 February under the guise of a 'false flag' operation and our Pakistan Air Force (PAF) capitulated to India on 27 February, displaying bravery and courage. He claimed that two Indian warships were damaged in response, and one of them crashed in the Samahni region of 'Azad Kashmir.' An Indian pilot, Abhinandan, was taken into custody and later freed after Imran Khan, the country's then-prime minister, sent a message of peace to India. Pakistan made it plain that if India attacked 'Azad Kashmir', Pakistan would not hesitate and would respond appropriately. On 27 February 2019, he claimed, Pakistan proved its point by shooting down two Indian jets. With this response from Pakistan, India was made aware that it will suffer the consequences of any future attempts to attack 'Azad Kashmir.' He thanked PAF for offering an appropriate response to India.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/02/27/president-ajk-salutes-the-paf-for-brave-response-against-india/>

Mushaal lashes out at the Indian government over human rights violations

Business recorder, 28 February 2023

The chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organization, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, criticized the Indian government for allowing the 'worst human rights abuses' in the history of the world to take place in 'Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) and vowed that the courageous people of Kashmir would do whatever it takes to end their 'enslavement.' She commended Azerbaijan for continuing to support the struggle for Kashmir's freedom against India's 'illegal enslavement' during her remarks at a seminar on 'Humanitarian Tragedies in OIC Geography,' which was attended by Khazar Farhadov, the ambassador of Azerbaijan. According to Mushaal, the people and the government of Azerbaijan have also backed and supported Kashmiris in their legitimate struggle for the right to self-determination. She claimed that the occupied valley's residents consistently responded and strongly denounced the Armenian armed forces' aggression against Azerbaijan, particularly the tragic Khojaly genocide, which she said was one of the bloodiest episodes in the Armenian nationalists' campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide against Azerbaijanis. Mushaal claimed that the supremacist Indian forces made life 'a

hell' for the Kashmiri people as they committed 'atrocities' that went beyond the pale of decency. She added that, ironically, human rights organizations and major world powers took a callous attitude towards the developing humanitarian crisis in the 'IIOJK' and did not take any action against the 'Hindutva regime.'

She claimed that the Indian forces subjected everyone to their 'brutalities', including elder Kashmiri leaders, women, and children, as part of a plot to silence dissenting voices in the valley. But, she claimed that this policy of 'barbarism' did not work; rather, it fueled the flames even more. She pleaded with the Muslim world, particularly the OIC, to take the initiative in resolving the Kashmir dispute following the aspirations of the valley's residents. The ambassador of Azerbaijan said in a speech at the event that his country completely supports and defends Kashmir's right to self-determination. The ambassador declared that the Azerbaijani government vehemently opposed the ongoing 'brutality and terrorism' carried out by 'Indian forces' in the 'occupied valley.' The envoy stressed the need for a resolution of the Kashmir issue as per the wishes and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40228700/mushaal-lashes-out-at-indian-govt-over-human-rights-violations>

Pasban-e-Hurriyat pays tribute to Zakoora and Taingpura martyrs, Srinagar

Daily Parliament Times, 1 March 2023

The chairman of Pasban-e-Hurriyat, Uzair Ahmad Ghazali, criticized the failure to prosecute Indian army soldiers responsible for the events on 1 March 1990 at Zakoora and Taingpura. He claimed that 33 years earlier, in Zakoora and Taingpura, the Indian army had ruthlessly ‘murdered’ more than 50 innocent residents. He bemoaned the fact that the perpetrators of the massacres in Zakoora and Taingpura have not been brought to justice after the passage of three decades. Ghazali claimed that since 1990, the Indian government and its brutal forces have massacred innocent citizens in Jammu and Kashmir, in which hundreds of Kashmiri citizens were ‘martyred.’ He said that the memories of the ‘massacre’ of Zakoora and Taingpura on 1 March 1990 are still present in minds of the Kashmiri people. Uzair said that the international community, United Nations (UN), its War Crimes Tribunal, and human rights organizations should take notice of the ‘genocide’ of Kashmiris by Indian ‘armed forces’ for the last 34 years.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/03/01/pasban-e-hurriyat-pays-tribute-to-zakoora-and-taingpura-martyrs-srinagar/>

Trade with India

The nation, 2 March 2023

Pakistan’s trade with India has seen many fluctuations since its inception. The last time Pakistan restricted trade with India was after New Delhi revoked the special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019. Pakistan’s trade policies with India are outdated. Instead of direct trade, we purchase Indian products through third countries like Dubai and Singapore which costs us more. The recent floods triggered by monsoon’s torrential rains wreaked havoc within our country. In this critical situation, international aid agencies requested to allow them to bring faster aid supplies to the affected through the Indian border. But the government did not allow them for relief operations. Hostilities like in Kashmir and other factors are the main reasons for restricting trade. Through direct trade, it can promote peace and act as a confidence-building measure, which could lead to a better, less hostile environment and can resume bilateral dialogue on the decades-old Kashmir dispute. It can also promote domestic prosperity, counter domestic problems, promote harmony and bring internal stability. Trade with India can save our foreign exchanges. Like, in 2004, it was estimated that Pakistan could save \$110 million a year if it directly bought tea from India rather than Kenya or other

sources. Through trade, our geographical proximity can promote cultural affinity with the people of both countries because we share so much same. Trade will also enhance both countries' prospects for peace and prosperity. As the French Economist Frederic Bastiat said, 'When goods do not cross borders, soldiers do.'

<https://www.nation.com.pk/02-Mar-2023/trade-with-india>

Farooq Siddiqui says Kashmir Global Council announce to hold Washington Kashmir Conference

Daily Parliament Times, 5 March 2023

Farooq Siddiqui, the president of the Kashmir Global Council, stated that the Kashmir Conference would be held on 8 March on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, USA. The conference will be put on by the Women's Fund, and it will be significant since it will take place on International Women's Day, which will draw attention to the need for women's empowerment all around the world. The theme of the conference is 'Empowerment of Women' and 'Kashmir a Colony in the 21st Century.' The conference's expert speakers will focus on the problems that the globe is currently confronting concerning the engagement of women and people in general at the grassroots level in developing democracies and nations with authoritarian regimes. The speakers will also draw attention to Kashmir and the issue of its inhabitants, who have been forcibly

divided for more than 70 years along artificial boundaries known as the Line of Control. These arbitrary boundaries that pass across populated areas, rich in natural resources, and village communities are a remnant of a colonial mentality that cannot exist in the twenty-first century. These regions violate the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights because they are ruled by an absolute military authority without any legitimacy. In light of the region's shifting geopolitical and economic conditions, speakers will offer suggestions on how the United States should assist Kashmiris. Kashmiris want to regain their control over their areas, but they are caught between a stronger China, an unstable Afghanistan, and ideologically hostile India and Pakistan. The conference will feature speakers like Shuja Nawaz, former director of the South Asia Institute in Washington, Khola Siddiqui of Columbia University, Saba Qadri of Columbia University, and Beverly Hill, president of Gender Equality America.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/03/05/farooq-siddiqui-says-kashmir-global-council-announce-to-hold-washington-kashmir-conference/>

'Modi regime rendering IIOJK people homeless ': Kashmiri experts

Pakistan Today, 5 March 2023

The 'Indian fascist administration' led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is 'displacing' Kashmiris in their own country under various pretexts.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) was used by the 'occupation authorities' to seize two Kashmiris' ancestral homes in Srinagar and Sopore as well as 168 Kashmiris' properties in the Jammu region's Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri, and Poonch districts. The seizure of the possessions of Kashmiris, according to locals in Srinagar, is a blatant act of political vengeance on the part of the Modi government. They claimed that Kashmiris' properties are being seized by the Indian government as retaliation for their participation in the current liberation fight and that Indian troops routinely demolish Kashmiris' homes during bloody military operations. They claimed that in the 'occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir, killing Kashmiris in fictitious clashes and looting private property have become commonplace. The Kashmiris are being 'stripped' of their identity as part of the Modi regime's policy to make them homeless. They denounced the violent methods India is employing to stifle the ongoing struggle for Kashmir's independence and asserted that the people of Jammu and Kashmir will continue to fight for their rightful cause despite the Indian government's devious plans.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/03/05/modi-regime-rendering-iiojk-people-homeless-kashmiri-experts/>

[Economic Developments](#)

The federal government should refrain from conspiring to halt major projects: GB Minister of Agriculture

Dailyk2, 27 February 2023

The Minister of Agriculture for Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Muhammad Kazim Maysam, stated in a media interview regarding the Public Works Department's decision to cancel the tender for the Shagharthing Road project that technical issues were cited as the reason for the cancellation. He asserted, however, that a re-tender was assured after the issue was brought up. No mishap, he declared, would be allowed to derail this tremendous project. If they try to stop this initiative, he said, we will have them by the necks. Additionally, he claimed that the federal government is behaving sloppily when releasing PSDP programs, which constitutes territorial enmity. He further said that the federal government must exercise caution when dealing with GB because it is conducting a backdoor meeting with the opposition while GB is suffering a financial calamity. If the federal government tries to cut PSDP programs or meddle with plans like Shagharthing Road, we will reply to them in a way that will be remembered for years. He said that people are trying to undermine GB after putting the country on OLX.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/12448>

The PM promised to address the wheat shortage and announced plans to operate Hajj flights from Skardu

Dailyk2, 28 February 2023

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced that the Hajj flight for this year will leave from Skardu Airport during a conversation with the governor of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Syed Mehdi Shah, and the federal advisor on Kashmir and GB affairs, Qamar Zaman Kaira. He asserted that the federal government's primary priority is to guarantee that the population has access to wheat, therefore a strategy will be created to resolve the GB wheat problem. He stated that funding will soon be made available for GB development initiatives. He stated that the federal government will play a significant role in expanding the region's infrastructure and promoting tourism there and that a comprehensive plan is being established for the development of tourism. He said that the GB has huge potential for the tourist sector.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/12468>

Gilgit residents protest wheat, electricity shortage

Dawn, 1 March 2023

Several people protested in Gilgit and Ghanche districts over a persistent shortage of electricity and wheat. Many residents in Gilgit, including women, of the Zulfiqarabad neighborhood, gathered at a main intersection and blocked Shahrah-i-Quaid-i-Azam to

protest up to 22 hours of daily power outages in their area. The demonstrators chanted slogans against the government and said the crisis had been going on for the last two weeks. The residents said they were sometimes deprived of even two hours of daily electricity supply, making their lives difficult amid winter. They were also faced with wheat shortage and blamed the government for failing to provide even necessities to people. One protester said the GB chief minister should be here to resolve public issues, but he was in Lahore 'to protect former Prime Minister Imran Khan.' The protesters dispersed peacefully after Amin Baig, coordinator to the chief minister, negotiated with them and assured them of resolving their issues immediately. Meanwhile, the residents of Ghanche's Barah village also staged a protest against the wheat shortage. The demonstrators blocked Siachen Road and staged a sit-in to press the government to fulfill their demands. The protesters ended their sit-in only after food department officials negotiated with them and assured them of solving their problems urgently.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1739718/gilgit-residents-protest-wheat-electricity-shortage>

The CPEC project would usher in a new age of prosperity in 'Azad Kashmir:' 'AJK' Ministry of Forests

UrduPoint, 1 March 2023

According to 'Azad Kashmir's Minister of Forests, Chaudhry Muhammad Akmal Sargala, the China-Pakistan

Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects would usher in a new age of prosperity for the region and the government is employing all available means to ensure its citizens' well-being. During meetings with various public delegations, he said that the CPEC projects will be crucial to the economic development of Pakistan and 'Azad Kashmir' and that Prime Minister Tanveer Ilyas Khan is using all available resources to promote tourism and safeguard the state's forests. He claimed that the creation of the Mirpur District Special Economic Zone in 'Azad Kashmir' will stabilize the region's economy. According to him, the development of the Eastern Highway through the Rattu Shounter tunnel will also offer the quickest path for 'Azad Kashmir' and Punjab to access GB, and the Neelum district will also be connected to GB through a short route to promote tourism and development.

<https://www.urdupoint.com/pakistan/news/muzaffarabad/national-news/live-news-3493199.html>

[From Vernacular Urdu Media](#)

India will always remember 27 February as a terrible nightmare: 'AJK' PM

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 28 February 2023

The Prime Minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan had proclaimed that 27 February will go down in history as a nightmare for India and lauded the

Pakistan Air Force for mounting the best defense against India. On 27 February, he claimed, the Shaheens of the Pakistan Air Force displayed their professionalism to bruise India's ego. The Pakistan Air Force's Shaheens' flight frightened the adversary, and it will no longer even try crossing the border again. He said that the Pakistan Air Force, whose weapon is always pointed towards the adversary, is a masterpiece of Iqbal's eagle spirit. India therefore should not organize similar expeditions in the future since the Pakistani Air Force's Shaheens would not only foil the Indian Army's devious tactics but will also target them in their territory.

He said that India attempted to destabilize our nation with surgical strikes for a while, but it was ineffective. India carried out so-called surgical attacks on a tree in the Hazara Division on 27 February. He claimed, Indian jets were pinned down successfully in an open-air confrontation, which served as a lesson for Indian pilots as well. The Pakistan Air Force, which had been trained by like of Air Marshals Asghar Khan and Noor Khan, was invincible, according to him. The nation recommitted itself to the idea that Pakistanis would not hesitate to make the greatest sacrifice to defend their country.

He congratulated the Pakistan Air Force for 'shooting down' two Indian fighter jets and destroying PM Modi's ego. He claimed that India will keep

'licking its wounds' as long as Abhinandan is alive. He claimed that on 27 February, Pakistan's citizens and residents of both sides of the Line of Control held their heads high in pride, demonstrating not only how much they loved and respected Pakistan's armed forces but also how battles were won by using courage, bravery, and wisdom rather than overwhelming force. He claimed that India would inevitably lose to the Pakistan Army in 'occupied Kashmir' even if it employed all the power it desired. He claimed that the nation of Pakistan and the resilient Kashmiris has complete faith in its armed forces, who have always flown the green crescent flag.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Resize-of-front-27.jpg>

SC barred PM from nominating judges in GB

Jasarat, 1 March 2023

In letters it wrote to the justices who had previously been nominated to the Supreme Appellate Court of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), the Supreme Court (SC) forbade Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif from appointing judges in GB. The appeal submitted by the chief minister of GB against the justices' nominations by Shehbaz Sharif was considered by the SC three-judge bench, which was presided over by Justice Ijazul Ahsan. Shehbaz Sharif gave three judges of the GB Chief Court an extension after GB Governor Syed Mahdi Shah gave a brief overview. Yet without consulting

the chief minister first, the summary was prepared. The petitioner was permitted to modify the summary, and the additional attorney general requested one week to submit a thorough response. The petitioner's attorney, Makhdoom Ali Khan, disagreed with the request. He claimed that even though the matter had been on the court's docket, judges were still being chosen. Justice Ahsan questioned the attorney general about the appointment of judges in GB and added that if there are no appointments for a few weeks, it doesn't matter.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2023/03/01/supremecourt-5/>

Another Kashmiri youth martyred while being held by the army in 'occupied Kashmir'

Jammu and Kashmir Times, 3 March 2023

A young man named Abdul Rashid Dar, who was 'kidnapped' by the Indian army in December of last year, was found dead in the Zurhama Forest region of the Kupwara district. After his passing, protests against the Modi government and its brutal army took out in Kunan Poshpora. According to Kashmir Media Service, Abdul Rashid Dar's body was delivered to his family and his parents told the media that their son had passed away while being held captive. As soon as word of the recovery of Dar's body spread, the residents in the Kunan Poshpora area protested against India and its 'ruthless troops.' The demonstrators screamed

anti-Indian slurs and called for punishment for the Indian army personnel involved in Dar's abduction and subsequent murder while they were holding his dead body. It should be noted that earlier in January, Dar's family had protested in Srinagar's press zone, claiming that their kin had been forced into disappearance after the Indian army had taken him into prison. Dar was detained on 22 December by the Indian army for 'questioning in connection with a militancy case', Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kupwara Yougal Manhas had earlier told the media.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Resize-of-B-03.jpg>

Kashmiris are putting up a valiant resistance against Indian tyranny and oppression: 'AJK' President

UrduPoint, 3 March 2023

The president of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK), Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has urged Kashmiris who reside outside of the region to contribute fully to exposing 'Indian crimes' in the 'Illegally Occupied region of Jammu and Kashmir' (IOJK) and raising awareness of their struggle. While speaking to Pamela Malik, Ghazala Khan, and Kanwal Khan of the Jammu and Kashmir Movement for Self-Determination International UK, Mehmood asserted that it is the duty of Kashmiris living outside of Kashmir to do everything in their power to draw attention to the dreadful situation in

'IOJK.' He claimed that Kashmiris are bravely resisting Indian 'oppression and tyranny' and that India has transformed the 'occupied territory' into a military cantonment by stationing more than 900,000 army personnel there. He claimed that the 'occupying Indian army had made life in Kashmir unbearable for the locals. He continued by saying it is disturbing that India's 'apartheid administration' has increased its attempts to bring about tangible change with the intention of turning a Muslim-majority region into a minority. He stressed that coordinated efforts are required to successfully bring these concerns to the fore at the international level to prevent India's sinister intentions in the region.

<https://www.urduPoint.com/pakistan/news/mirpur/kashmir/live-news-3495434.html>

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Disclaimer

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