

# Weekly POK News Digest

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

Volume 3 | Issue 34

21 August - 27 August 2023

**Education Starter**  
**Diamer Basha Dam**  
**POK Gilgit-Baltistan**  
**Hydropower protest**



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

No. 1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg  
New Delhi-110 010

## Contents

### Political Developments

- JKLF distances itself from Mushaal Malik's selection as PM's aide
- Muslim girls forced to recite Hindu prayers in 'IIOJK' School
- Elderly man killed after unprovoked firing by Indian army in Kotli along LoC: ISPR
- GB govt unveils strategy to address climate concerns
- OIC calls on India to reverse 'illegal, unilateral' 2019 IIOJK measures
- 'IIOJK' Crackdown Persists
- Gilgit-Baltistan tense after protests against 'derogatory statements' spread
- Modi regime criminalising journalism to cover up its crimes in 'IIOJK'

### Economic Developments

- The financial resources of the 'AJK' government are much less than other provinces of Pakistan: Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq
- Land acquisition for Dasu Dam completed substantially: WAPDA Chairman
- Saif lauds education reforms in GB; and terms it a leap towards progress, prosperity

### Vernacular Urdu Media

- The FO called the Indian charge d'affaires to register a complaint on the breach of the ceasefire agreement on LoC
- India's biggest smuggling enterprise was thwarted by Pakistan Rangers
- People are being pitted against one another as part of a conspiracy: Awami Action Committee
- 'AJK' PM Anawar ul Haq met with interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani

## Political Developments

### **JKLF distances itself from Mushaal Malik's selection as PM's aide**

*Dawn, 21 August 2023*

Pro-independence Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) has declared that the organisation or its incarcerated leader Yasin Malik has nothing to do with the appointment of Mushaal Hussein Malik as Special Assistant to the caretaker Prime Minister (SAPM). Ms Malik, who married the JKLF chief in 2009 during his Pakistan visit, became one of the five SAPMs with ministerial status in the cabinet of caretaker PM Anwarul Haq Kakar. She was assigned the portfolio of human rights and women's empowerment. The appointment received extensive coverage in Indian media, prompting varied reactions on social media, including concerns for the safety of her spouse languishing in an Indian jail. In a statement, Raja Haq Nawaz, the acting chairman of Rawalpindi-based JKLF, said, 'The Pakistani citizen, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, is not a member of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front that any statement or actions of hers can be ascribed to the organization. Neither has she ever made any such claim.' He further added that 'as the spouse of our chairman, she is respectable to us. Where the entire Kashmiri nation together with the JKLF is upset and worried about India's exploits against Yasin Malik, his family is also

distressed.' Mr Nawaz highlighted that JKLF supporters globally are actively advocating for Mr Malik through appropriate political and diplomatic channels. He praised Mr. Malik's peaceful, non-religious, non-extremist, and non-violent struggle for freedom of 'Indian-held Kashmir', considering him the national spokesperson for the true freedom movement.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1771280/jklf-distances-itself-from-mushaal-maliks-selection-as-pms-aide>

### **Muslim girls forced to recite Hindu prayers in 'IIOJK' School**

*Pakistan Observer, 21 August 2023*

A recent video making rounds on social media shows Muslim girls being forced to sing Hindu prayers in 'Indian illegally occupied Kashmir' (IIOK). In the disturbing incident, Muslim girls from a local secondary school in Kashmir were being 'forced to recite Hindu prayers' by their teachers. The girls, all Muslim, were assembled during a morning assembly. Upon their refusal to recite Hindu prayers, they were threatened with expulsion from the school. The incident has been widely condemned by Muslim civil society and human rights groups around the world, with many calling for immediate action against the teachers and those responsible. The video has been shared by Muzammil Ayyub Thakur, an online Kashmir-based activist. The Islam Information website wrote that Islamophobia in

India and 'occupied Kashmir' is on the rise, as evidenced by the recent incident in which a mentally disabled Muslim man was burnt alive by a Hindu mob. The killings of Muslims are also increasing at an alarming rate, reaching the highest levels ever recorded. Similarly, in 'occupied Kashmir', Muslims face immense pressure from Indian armed forces, despite it being a Muslim-majority region, to refrain from practicing their religion. The Indian government, with a Hindu-centric approach, actively promotes its religious and political agenda, seeking to reshape the region according to its beliefs.

<https://pakobserver.net/muslim-girls-forced-to-recite-hindu-prayers-in-iiok-school/>

### **Elderly man killed after unprovoked firing by Indian army in Kotli along LoC: ISPR**

*Dawn, 21 August 2023*

A 60-year-old man was 'martyred' when the Indian army opened 'unprovoked firing' at the Line of Control (LoC) in Kotli's Nikial sector, according to a statement from the military's media relations wing. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in its statement said the elderly man was a resident of Kotli district's Oli village, adding that three women cutting grass in the fields were 'traumatised' as well. The ISPR said that this 'blatant Indian aggression is a clear violation of existing ceasefire understandings,' adding that Pakistan

desired peace and tranquillity at its borders, but, would take all 'necessary measures' to protect the life and property of its citizens. In June, two civilians embraced 'martyrdom' while one other was injured as the Indian Army opened 'indiscriminate fire' at a group of shepherds at the LoC.

In its statement, the ISPR said: 'Driven by a newfound geopolitical patronage, Indian forces have embarked on a plan to take innocent lives to satiate their false narratives and concocted allegations.' The Foreign Office had also summoned the Indian Charge d' Affairs to register Pakistan's protest and condemn the incident. In May, Indian troops had shot dead a 25-year-old inadvertent crosser from 'AJK.' Earlier on 15 May, a 65-year-old widow from the Pandu sector of 'AJK's Jhelum Valley district was also mercilessly killed by the Indian army after she had strayed across the LoC while picking some medicinal plants.

### *The Line of Control*

In February 2021, both countries recommitted themselves to the 2003 ceasefire arrangement at the LoC and agreed to address the 'core issues' that could undermine peace and stability. The surprise announcement had been made in a joint statement by the militaries of the two countries on a 'hotline contact' between their director generals military operations. Pakistan and India had in November 2003 agreed to cease fire along the LoC and

the Working Boundary. The agreement held for a few years, but regular violations have occurred since 2008. A sharp spike in truce breaches has been witnessed since 2014 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in India. In 2020, the Indian troops committed over 3,000 ceasefire violations in which 28 people were martyred. In February 2019, both countries came close to a significant confrontation when Pakistan Air Force shot down two Indian planes that had violated Pakistani airspace. One of the Indian pilots was captured by Pakistan but was later handed over as a gesture of peace.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1771390/elderly-man-killed-after-unprovoked-firing-by-indian-army-in-kotli-along-loc-ispr>

### **GB govt unveils strategy to address climate concerns**

*The Nation, 22 August 2023*

The government of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) unveiled a comprehensive strategy aimed at effectively managing and overseeing environmental concerns surrounding tourist attractions facing heightened pressures. Several pivotal initiatives are poised for approval by the cabinet in the upcoming days. These initiatives signify a pivotal step forward in addressing environmental issues in tourist-centric areas. One of the prominent initiatives is the formulation of guidelines governing the establishment of tourist facilities within

ecologically sensitive and critical regions, said Chief Secretary GB Muhiudeen Wani in an official statement to the media. He said that these guidelines have successfully cleared the evaluation process by the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Business. Secretary GB said a proactive approach towards sustainable environmental practices and the development of eco-friendly tourist destinations is in motion through the comprehensive master planning of ecologically sensitive and critical zones. He said following the endorsement of the PC II, proficient consultants have been engaged to steer this endeavour in the right direction.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/22-Aug-2023/gb-govt-unveils-strategy-to-address-climate-concerns>

### **OIC calls on India to reverse 'illegal, unilateral' 2019 'IIOJK' measures**

*The Express Tribune, 23 August 2023*

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) called upon India to reverse all 'illegal and unilateral measures' taken on or after 5 August 2019 and to stop the gross, systematic, and widespread human rights abuses in 'Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK). The call made by OIC Chief Hissein Brahim Taha was read out by Assistant Secretary-General for Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs Samir Bakr at an event and photo exhibition hosted by the Muslim bloc's secretariat general in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Taha

said that meaningful engagement and dialogue among the parties, as well as a constructive involvement of the international community, are essential steps in the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. The secretary-general recalled that during the 49th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in March this year in Nouakchott, Mauritania, the council urged India to reverse 'all illegal and unilateral measures taken on or after 5 August 2019.

Before 5 August 2019, 'IIOJK' had its constitution, flag, and two-house assembly that could make its own laws. The Indian government also scrapped another legislation, Article 35A of the Indian Constitution, which empowered the 'IIOJK' government to define its residents and barred all outsiders from owning properties or taking government jobs, raising fears that more than 12 million original residents, nearly 28% of them Hindus, would be reduced into a minority by outsiders. The Indian government defended the move as its 'sovereign decision' approved by parliament. It said the special status was responsible for 'separatism'-the popular anti-India insurgency is now nearly 33 years old – and was responsible for the economic backwardness of the region. It is facing challenge in the Supreme Court of India where judges are hearing cases against removal of special status almost daily.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2432180/oic-calls-on-india-to-reverse-illegal-unilateral-2019-iiojk-measures>

## 'IIOJK' Crackdown Persists

*The Nation, 23 August 2023*

The 'oppression' in 'Illegally Indian-Occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) continues as the BJP government clamps down on journalists once again, this time forcing The Kashmir Walla—a news portal—to dismantle and vacate its offices. Just two days prior, its website and social media accounts were also blocked. Freedom of the press is a concept that is dying in Kashmir, leaving the locals little to no platforms through which they can voice their opinions or stories. Remarkably, the international community has still not taken a step to curtail India's atrocious actions in the region. As per news reports, the 'occupational forces' had shut down the news portals' online platform to maintain control over the media and news as a whole.

The Kashmir Walla's website and social media were blocked and with the latest development of forcing workers and journalists out of the office. So, this is part of a larger clampdown against the press in the disputed region. Ever since the region's autonomy was revoked forcefully by India, journalists and media workers have experienced extreme hostility. People have been regularly arrested, questioned by the police, and in most instances, have had their lives taken due to perceived backlash 'against the state'. State terrorism has become the norm, and we



have a situation where even international humanitarian workers and their organisations are not allowed to operate freely in 'IIOJK.' As activists are jailed and journalists are harassed over trumped-up charges, there is little protest or outcry from the international community as the BJP government continues to clamp down on the indigenous movement for fundamental rights.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/23-Aug-2023/iiojk-crackdown-persists>

### **Gilgit-Baltistan tense after protests against 'derogatory statements' spread**

*Pamir Times, 24 August 2023*

The law and order situation has deteriorated in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) after protest demonstrations starting in Chilas (Diamer) spread to other parts of the region. Protest demonstrations were also held in the Upper Kohistan district. The Karakoram Highway remained blocked in Chilas. Babusar Road was also closed for traffic. Protesters also blocked roads at multiple locations in Gilgit city. Protest demonstrations and sit-ins were also held in the Astore district.

*Why are people protesting?*

The protest demonstrations started in reaction to allegedly sacrilegious remarks made by Sheikh Baqir Al-Hussaini, a prominent religious scholar based in Skardu. He is accused of allegedly using derogatory remarks

against religious and historical personalities. The protesters are demanding the registration of a case against the scholar and the arrest of him. They have vowed to keep the roads blocked till the scholar is arrested. GB saw a remarkable display of interfaith harmony during the recently held Muharram processions, where people from different schools of thought came together as a mark of solidarity. The recent incident and the reactionary protest demonstrations have spread fear and panic across the region, which has a sordid history of sectarian strife that has taken hundreds of lives.

*Efforts to open the Road*

Earlier today, a delegation of elected officials and administrators met with the protesters in Chilas and convinced them to open the Karakoram Highway and let the passengers move to their destinations. The road was, however, later closed again by the protesters. Religious scholars, political leaders, and officials are continuing to talk to the protesters to open the roads. GB Education Department has dispelled reports that educational institutions will be closed tomorrow in Gilgit city. However, there are reports that some private educational institutes will remain closed tomorrow.

<https://pamirtimes.net/2023/08/23/gilgit-baltistan-tense-after-protests-against-derogatory-statements-spread/>

## **Modi regime criminalising journalism to cover up its crimes in 'IIOJK'**

*Pakistan Observer, 27 August 2023*

The Narendra Modi-led Indian government is criminalizing journalism in 'Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir' (IIOJK) to cover up its 'crimes' in the territory. In its latest clampdown on media in 'IIOJK', the Modi regime recently blocked the Srinagar-based news outlet 'The Kashmir Walla', said an analysis by Kashmir Media Service. It said the closure of The Kashmir Walla is yet another act of criminalization of journalism in the 'occupied territory.' The analysis pointed out that since 5 August 2019, the victimization of journalists has increased manifold in 'IIOJK' where India has made independent journalism almost impossible after introducing the so-called media policy in 2020. It said the Modi regime is using strong-arm tactics against the Kashmiri media persons to ensure there is no critical story at all. It further claimed that journalists are harassed, abducted, threatened, and tortured simply for doing their job in 'IIOJK.' They are booked under draconian laws for speaking the truth. Many Kashmiri journalists including Aasif Sultan, Fahad Shah, and Sajjad Gul are facing detentions under draconian laws. Journalists face killings, murder attempts, arrests, and threats regularly in 'occupied

Kashmir', the analysis said, adding that several media persons have been killed while scores others injured since 1989. It said Narendra Modi wants to turn 'IIOJK' media into a public relations vehicle of his regime and hide the ground realities of the territory from the world. The international community must come forward to rescue the independent media in 'occupied Kashmir', it added.

<https://pakobserver.net/modi-regime-criminalising-journalism-to-cover-up-its-crimes-in-iiojk/>

## **Economic Developments**

### **The financial resources of the 'AJK' government are much less than other provinces of Pakistan: Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq**

*Daily Parliament Times, 22 August 2023*

The 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK) Government Minister Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq said that the financial resources of the 'AJK' government are much less than those of Punjab or other provinces of Pakistan. He noted that the salaries of the employees and pensioners have been increased, while the implementation of the recent increase in electricity bills has been stopped and a committee consisting of ministers has been established to review it. He said that some people are trying unsuccessfully to blackmail the government for their personal interests so that the mafia can succeed in their goals, but Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq and the government will



not engage in any kind of blackmail. He said that the government recently increased energy prices but afterward withdrew it after realizing the challenges facing the populace. The Prime Minister of 'AJK' has met with the caretaker finance minister of Pakistan, in which other issues including the financial problems of 'Azad Kashmir' have been established while discussions have been held for a solution, he said. He also said that the people of Mirpur district have sacrificed their ancestors not once but twice for the construction of the Mangala Dam. These sacrifices should not go in vain. Till now the remaining works should be completed in the towns by WAPDA.

<https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2023/08/22/financial-resources-of-the-ajk-government-are-very-less-than-other-provinces-of-pakistan-chaudhry-azhar-sadiq/>

### **Land acquisition for Dasu Dam completed substantially: WAPDA Chairman**

*The Nation, 23 August 2023*

The process of land acquisition for Dasu has substantially been completed and its stage-I of 2,160 MW will start electricity generation in 2026. The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Engr Sajjad Ghani has said that the pace of construction work will be further accelerated on the Dasu Hydropower Project, as a long-delayed process of land acquisition has

substantially been completed. During a briefing by the Project Managers of the Consultants and the Contractors, the chairman was briefed that the river diversion system functioning satisfactorily during the recent high-flow season. It was further informed that a 1.3-km-long left bank flushing tunnel has also been temporarily opened last week for the traffic to bypass the main dam site and facilitate excavation of the dam abutment at the left bank as well. Excavation of the intake, powerhouse, tail race tunnel, surge chamber, and transformers cavern is also in progress.

The project is being constructed across the River Indus, upstream of Dasu Town in the Upper Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The 4,320-MW-Dasu Hydropower Project is planned to be completed in two stages. In June this year, WAPDA announced that stage I of the concrete Starter Dam had been completed upstream of the main Dasu Dam site. As per the design, the Starter Dam for the Dasu Hydropower Project is to be completed in two stages: Stage I up to an elevation of 785 meters, and Stage II up to an elevation of 798 meters above mean sea level. According to WAPDA, stage I of the concrete Starter Dam was completed before the high-flow season. As the high flow season has started, the River Indus is flowing through the two Diversion Tunnels completed earlier this year, while some of the river water is overtopping the concrete Starter Dam as designed.

After the high flow season in October this year, the construction of the Starter Dam's stage II will be carried out. Stage II is scheduled for completion during the coming low-flow season. At present, WAPDA is constructing its stage-I with an installed generation capacity of 2,160 MW and annual energy generation of 12 billion units. Stage I of the project is likely to start electricity generation in 2026. The 2,160-MW stage-II, when implemented, will also provide 9 billion units to the National Grid. On completion of both stages, Dasu will become the project with the highest annual energy generation in Pakistan i.e. 21 billion units per annum on average. The project will commence by the end of 2026. Earlier, the Chairman also visited the Diamer Basha Dam Project to review construction activities on the key sites. The Chairman was briefed that the construction activities are being carried out simultaneously on 10 sites of the main works, which include a permanent bridge, diversion tunnel, left and right abutments, and low-level outlets. The Diamer Basha Dam Project is scheduled for completion in 2027-28. The Dam will have a gross water storage of 8.1 MAF to irrigate 1.23 million acres of additional land. The installed power generation capacity of the project stands at 4,500 MW.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/23-Aug-2023/land-acquisition-for-dasu-dam-completed-substantially-wapda-chairman>

### **Saif lauds education reforms in GB; and terms it a leap towards progress, prosperity**

*Pakistan Today, 24 August 2023*

Dr. Umar Saif, the Caretaker Minister for Science and Technology (MoST), has lauded the groundbreaking education reforms implemented in Gilgit Baltistan (GB). During a high-level meeting held at the MoST, which was also attended by Secretary MoST Ali Raza Bhutta, Chief Secretary GB Mohyuddin Ahmed Wani, and other representatives from both the ministry and GB government, the far-reaching initiatives to overhaul education, technology, and healthcare sectors across the region were extensively discussed. One of the most remarkable achievements has been witnessed in Government Primary Schools, where students are now receiving daily nutritious meals. This thoughtful initiative has led to an awe-inspiring increase in attendance rates, soaring from a mere 65% to an outstanding 90%. Embracing the importance of modern education, 200 schools have pioneered the integration of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Computer Education, and Entrepreneurship courses, supplemented by practical training. To facilitate this innovative approach, 34 schools are now equipped with cutting-edge IT infrastructure, including Digital Interactive Smart TVs and Learning Management Systems (LMS).

Underscoring their commitment to the advancement of education, 200 additional Smart Schools are in the pipeline, set to be adorned with high-tech LED Smart Screens, Chromebooks, and solar-powered facilities. The educational transformation also extends to Skardu, where 18 schools have been furnished with Smart Interactive Whiteboards, Multimedia Projectors, and Core i7 computers – a concerted effort to promote interactive learning. To alleviate infrastructure challenges, the region is adding 55 classrooms, all equipped with state-of-the-art IT tools and Learning Management Systems. A recent milestone was the grand GB Summer Fiesta 2023, which engaged a staggering 28,000 students over 10 days. The festival offered diverse programs such as IT Boot Camps, Mathematics Clubs, Mental Health Awareness Sessions, and even Yoga Classes, attracting collaboration from distinguished organizations like Karandaz and LUMS, thus culminating in a dynamic learning experience.

To ensure quality instruction, the government recruited 1000 Education Fellows through a rigorous bidding process, effectively enhancing the availability of STEM and Computer Education teachers throughout the region. This step, where fellows are employed on a contractual basis, aims to elevate educational standards across the board. Notably, Karandaaz

Pakistan is also actively engaged in promoting financial literacy among students. In a nod to sustainability and preparedness, 184 IT labs in schools have been solarized, offering a much-needed power backup to counter frequent outages and ensure uninterrupted IT usage. Over 2000 students are benefitting from free evening coaching at Knowledge Inn Preparatory School (KIPS), significantly bolstering their academic performance and university admissions. Moreover, the Taleem Finance Scheme extends loans and stipends to students enrolling in top universities, easing their educational journey.

In a bid to empower females, the Pink Bus Project has been initiated, offering safe and free transportation services to women across various regions. Additionally, a strategic collaboration with the National College of Arts (NCA) has led to the establishment of an NCA campus in Gilgit, fostering artistic and cultural growth. The educational realm is further enriched by the National University of Sciences And Technology (NUST) provision of cutting-edge AI and Data Science Certification courses. Meanwhile, Maker-Space Labs are elevating schools by introducing robotics and 3D printing capabilities, inculcating vital technological skills. Moreover, teacher professional development programs and the establishment of a 50-bed

Cardiac Hospital further reflect the government's commitment to comprehensive growth.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/08/24/saif-lauds-education-reforms-in-gb-terms-it-a-leap-towards-progress-prosperity/>

### **From Vernacular Urdu Media**

**The FO called the Indian charge d'affaires to register a complaint on the breach of the ceasefire agreement on LoC**

*Jasarat, 22 August 2023*

Pakistan's Foreign Office (FO) summoned the Indian Chargé d'Affaires to register its strong protest over the killing of a Pakistani civilian as a result of unprovoked firing by Indian forces along the Line of Control (LoC). According to a press release from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ghias, a 60-year-old resident of Oli village in Kotli district, was killed on 21 August as a result of Indian firing in the Nikial Sector of the LoC in 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' (AJK). The FO emphasised the importance of upholding calm and peace along the LoC and pointed out that such actions are blatant violations of the 2003 ceasefire agreement between the two neighbours, which was reinforced in February 2021. The FO also stated in the news release that Pakistan 'strongly condemns this incident and reiterates its commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region.' The cease-fire agreement, which was intended to lessen hostilities

along the LoC, is now a key component of the bilateral accords between India and Pakistan. Since the two neighbours' renewed cease-fire in the disputed territory in February 2021, this was the second known instance of a cease-fire breach. A group of shepherds along the LoC were shot at without provocation by the Indian Army in June. Later, to express Pakistan's vehement protest over the ceasefire breach by the Indian soldiers, the Indian Charge d' Affaires was also called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After secret meetings intended to revive the peace talks, the two nations extended their ceasefire in February 2021. The ceasefire had held up until this point even though there had been a few occurrences, but the two sides handled them according to their agreed procedure.

<https://www.jasarat.com/2023/08/22/foreign-minister-22/>

**India's biggest smuggling enterprise was thwarted by Pakistan Rangers**

*Daily Pakistan, 22 August 2023*

India's largest smuggling operation was thwarted by Pakistan Rangers as from 29 July to 3 August, Pakistani rangers detained 6 Indian smugglers during an intrusion attempt. Gurmij Singh, Shindar Singh, Jaginder Singh, and Vishal Singh are among the Indian nationals who have been detained, according to the Public Relations Division of the Pakistani Army Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). The apprehended Indian nationals are from

Ferozpur and are suspected of being involved in the smuggling of drugs and weapons. Mahendra Singh, who lives in Jalandhar, and Gurinder Singh, who lives in Ludhiana, were also detained. The ISPR stated that action would be taken against the detained smugglers to prevent unauthorized entry into Pakistan and that any anti-state acts would be dealt with by Pakistani law. However, it is not implausible to imagine a connection between the Indian BSF and smugglers.

<https://dailypakistan.com.pk/22-Aug-2023/1617970>

**People are being pitted against one another as part of a conspiracy: Awami Action Committee**

*Dailyk2, 24 August 2023*

Fida Hussain, the Awami Action Committee's (AAC) chairman, presided over the meeting alongside Yusuf Nashad, Zaheer Qasmi, Zubair Ahmed, and other AAC members. Fida Hussain declared that Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) would soon have peace, and he praised everyone who had remained peaceful over the previous days of protests. He said that following the latest protests in parts of GB, the AAC was in constant contact with the Ulama of Baltistan, Diamar, and the Diamar youth to avoid any trouble. He said that the committee also closely monitored the peace and order in Gilgit City. He asserted that to get things back to normal, the AAC has made restoring GB's peace and order a top priority. He

noted that GB's residents have created a wonderful culture of fraternity and peace, and the manner they have gotten to know one another over the past two years is unheard of in the past. However, some unseen forces are working to sabotage this peaceful environment by refusing to embrace the spirit of solidarity and brotherhood that upholds peace and order in the region. Sadly, there is no indication of the GB government right now, and in fact, there is not even a government, he added.

There is also no sign of the Regional Peace Committee, Mosque Board, or Parliamentary Peace Committees, which were constituted in the interest of peace and order. But these so-called peace groups that have access to the government nevertheless act as spectators. He said that the AAC also asks the people to protect the law and order and to abstain from participating in any schemes, demonstrations, or conspiracies that might in the future split us. He advised locals to keep an eye out for criminals who want to disturb the peace in the neighborhood. He said that in addition to instilling in the pupils the values of peace and harmony, respect for other people and their faiths, and awareness of sacred locations. He also advised locals to hold off on saying anything controversial while keeping in mind the sensitivity of the area. He said that GB currently has serious social and economic issues, including widespread electrical



outages, a lack of access to wheat for the populace, and a lack of facilities for education and healthcare. The non-native bureaucratic occupation is working together to divert people's attention from the real issues and a divide-and-conquer strategy is being preached. He advised the citizens of GB to take note of the situation and band together to safeguard their fundamental human rights and riches.

<https://www.dailyk2.com/Post/16367>

### **‘AJK’ PM Anwar ul Haq met with interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani**

*Jammu and Kashmir Times, 25 August 2023*

The Prime Minister of ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ (AJK), Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq met with interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) ‘AJK’ chapter president Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, Senior Minister Colonel (R) Waqar Noor, Member of ‘AJK’ Legislative Assembly Hassan Ibrahim, and former Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider were with the ‘AJK’ premier on this occasion. The current political and human rights situation in the ‘Indian-occupied’ territory of Jammu and Kashmir was discussed with the interim foreign minister. The ‘Azad Kashmir’ leaders received assurances from the foreign minister that Pakistan continuously strives for Kashmiri's right to self-determination in

conformity with UN Security Council resolutions. The delegation commended Pakistan's government and people for their support of the Kashmiri people in their fight against India while also recognising Pakistan's unshakable commitment to the Kashmiris' just struggle for the right to self-determination. Jilani further assured the delegates about Pakistan's unwavering moral, diplomatic, and political support for Kashmiris' rightful struggle for self-determination.

<http://jammukashmirtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Resize-of-front-25-aug.jpg>

### **Social Media (tweets)**

**Ammar Ali Jan @ammaralijan**

*24 August 2023*

A spontaneous civil disobedience movement is emerging across Pakistan against electricity tariffs. Kashmir is leading the way & others are catching up. State is squeezing every penny saved by the salaried class. If this is the strategy to meet IMF demands, it's doomed to fail.

<https://twitter.com/ammaralijan/status/1694767016832352676>

**Syed Zaighum Kazmi**  
**@syedzaighum110**

*24 August 2023*

The FIR has been launched against Syed Baqir Al Hussaini for cursing Yazid bin Muawiyah bin Sufiyan. A huge gathering of Takfeeri get together



in chilas last day against him and openly threatened the whole Shia Community to identify and slaughter whoever been found on KKH.

<https://twitter.com/syedzaighum110/status/1694739663909503438>

**Ayesha Siddiq** @iamthedrifter

24 August 2023

So the tamasha begins - I always believed based on extensive fieldwork that there was never a divide between terrorism & sectarianism in Pak. Govts enhancing blasphemy will only play into hands of grps across sectarian divide - PAMIR TIMES.

*Story link:*

<https://twitter.com/iamthedrifter/status/1694698475319931341>

**Daily K2**@Dailyk2\_GB

26 August 2023

In a statement issued by the Interior Department of Gilgit-Baltistan, it has been said that to ensure safe travel and safety of passengers on the Karakoram Highway, the provincial government has decided to deploy police and Karakoram Security Force along with public transport.

[https://twitter.com/Dailyk2\\_GB/status/1695465245375156470](https://twitter.com/Dailyk2_GB/status/1695465245375156470)

**Basharat Issa** @BasharatIssa

28 August 2023

All religious communities in Gilgit-Baltistan have been living in peace and harmony for centuries. They share blood relations and there have always been acceptance and harmony. The sectarian conflicts are a recent development to destabilise the region and simply divide and rule.

<https://twitter.com/BasharatIssa/status/1696208523678326792>

# Weekly POK News Digest

Volume 3 | Issue 34

21 August - 27 August 2023

**Compiled by**

Mohd. Usman Bhatti and Muneeb Yousuf

**Edited By**

Dr. Smruti S Pattanaik

**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.*



**MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES**

No. 1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg  
New Delhi-110 010

Telephone: 91-11-26717983; Fax: 91-11-26154191

Website: [www.idsa.in](http://www.idsa.in); Email: [pokdigest@gmail.com](mailto:pokdigest@gmail.com)