THE GILGIT **AND BALTISTAN REGIONS OF** JAMMU **AND KASHMIR STATE**

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Preface

The earlier CENJOWS study on 'Understanding Baluchistan' brought to fore the need to better understand the regions of Gilgit and Baltistan, both legitimately Indian areas under illegal occupation of Pakistan. While the issues relating to these regions are generally well known and come up for regular discussion, a need to understand the obtaining present state of the people and polity, is what monograph seeks to address.

Apart from a snapshot of the land and its people, the ethnic diversity, rich culture and traditions and their immense natural resources that they are endowed, it has been endeavoured to present the genesis of present day issues in the backdrop of historical developments. Ill advised decisions on part of the Maharajah of J&K regarding management of Gilgit and British complicity and deceit in enabling Pakistan to illegally take possession of these regions are what the study highlights.

With a Shia: Sunni inverse ratio to that obtaining in Pakistan, maintaining peace, harmony and a social 'balance' in Gilgit and Baltistan requires mature political handling. How this has been poorly done by the various dispensations in Pakistan and highlighting how mutual antipathy between the two communities has exacerbated instead of being bridged is another area of interest.

The study also focuses on the 'Shaksgam valley' or the "Trans-Karakoram tract' again in the context of its history, particularly Younghusband's mission, the compulsions of Pakistan to cede the territory to China and the provisions of the Sino-Pak Frontier Agreement of 1963.

Gilgit and Baltistan are both regions that have distinctive cultures and traditions that are very different from the otherwise rapidly radicalising canvas that is engulfing the rest of Pakistan. Linkages between these regions and the rest of India are presently minimal. There is much scope for enhanced social, cultural as also economic 'people to people' connect, which is an imperative precursor to the eventual political reintegration whenever it takes place.

THE GILGIT AND BALTISTAN REGIONS OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE



INTRODUCTION

The Gilgit and Baltistan Regions of India's Jammu and Kashmir State, which are presently under the illegal occupation of Pakistan, are amongst the most spectacular regions of the world. A land where the world's three mighty mountain ranges - the Karakoram, Hindukush and the Himalayas meet, the regions are home to five of the fourteen mountain peaks in the world with heights over 8000 meters. These include the K-2, also known as Chogori (the world's second highest peak). Some of the largest glaciers outside the Polar Regions are also located in Baltistan.

The two regions, Gilgit and Baltistan, have their own respective history, geography, religions and traditions

Both regions have an abundant wealth of natural resources with several mineral deposits. The Indus River, which flows through the regions, offers enormous hydro-electric potential. They are multi-lingual, with much socio-cultural and ethnic diversity and are endeavouring hard to maintain their distinctive traditions. This study seeks to collate facts relating to the Regions and understand social and political issues afflicting them in their historical context.

For convenience of reference, the two regions hereafter are referred in this Monograph as 'Gilgit Baltistan'.

THE LAND

The land of the province lies amidst towering mountains, snow-clad peaks and narrow valleys with heights varying between 3000 feet and 28750 feet above sea level. The geology of the rocky mountains of Gilgit Baltistan is ancient, with some of the world's oldest rocks forming the stratified Precambrian peak groups such as the Baltoro, Rakaposhi, Ultar, Diran, Broadpeak, Muztagh towers, Trango Towers, Batura, Saltoro Kangri, the Gasherbrum, and Mashabrum.

Glaciers: Some of the largest glaciers outside the polar region are also found in Gilgit Baltistan. Twelve percent of the land of the two regions is covered by glacial ice. The major glaciers of the province are the Biafo - 62 km, Baltoro - 58 km, Hispar - 61 km, Gasherbrum - 38 km, Chogo Lungma - 38 km, Passu - 32 km, Batura - 58 km, Rupal - 29 km, Nabandi - 32 km, Baraldu - 30 km, Snowlake Sim glacier - 20 km and importantly, Siachen - 62 km.



Figure 1: The K2 Massif

Rivers and Valleys: While the river Indus and its tributaries are cardinal to the landscape of Gilgit Baltistan province. Except for a few places such as Skardu and Chilas, the area along the banks of the river is not amenable to large scale agricultural production. People have therefore had to adopt to smaller valleys and mountain slopes where glacial water is easy at hand for drinking and irrigation.

Mountain Ranges: The Karakorum, Hindukush, and the N.W. Himalaya ranges branch out from the Pamir knot. The geology of the rocky mountains of Gilgit Baltistan is ancient, with some of the world's oldest rocks forming the stratified Precambrian peak groups such as the Baltoro, Rakaposhi, Ultar, Diran, Broadpeak, Muztagh towers, Trango Towers, Batura, Saltoro Kangri, the Gasherbrum, and Mashabrum and importantly, K2 Peak.



MAJOR PASSES

There are countless traditional passes that open from both regions into to Afghanistan, the Tibet and Xingiang Autonomous Regions of China, besides the Kashmir valley. Some of the major passes of Gilgit Baltistan are:

	1
Burzil Pass (4100 mtrs)	An ancient pass on the caravan route between Srinagar and Gilgit. Now closed for use.
Burji La (4816 mtrs)	Located between Skardu and Deosai National Park. Famous especially for its beautiful panoramic view of many mountain peaks including that of K2, Nanga Parbat, Masherbrum and the Gasherbrum peaks.
Bichhar Pass (4,532 mtrs)	Lies at the boundary of the Ghizer and Gilgit districts.
Gondogoro Pass (5585 mtrs)	About 25 km south of K2. Connects the Gondogoro and Vigne Glaciers. Since 1986, a route to connect Concordia in the upper Baltoro Glacier to the Hushe Valley has been constructed over this pass.
Chaprot Pass (5,639 mtrs)	Located 70 km from Gilgit close to the Chaprote, once the Capital of Nagar. The region is marked by terraced fields and fruit orchards.
Darkot Pass (4,706 mtrs)	The border between Chitral and Gilgit Baltistan runs through this pass. Also known as "Darkut". Open from May to October.
Hispar Pass (5,128 mtrs)	Located where the Biafo and Hispar Glaciers meet to form the world's longest glacial traverse outside of the polar regions.
Irshad Pass (4,977 mtrs)	Connects upper Hunza valley with Wakhan Corridor in Afghanistan.
Kalandar Pass (5,224 mtrs)	Connects the upper Gilgit valley with Wakhan Corridor in Afghanistan.

Khunjerab Pass (4,693 mtrs)	Strategically important pass on the northern border with China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region and the highest point on the Karakoram Highway. Roadway completed in 1982 and preferred over the Mintaka and Kilik Passes. The name is derived from two words of the local Wakhi language: 'Khun' means Home and 'Jerav' means a creek coming from spring water/water falling.
Kilik Pass (4,827 mtrs) and Mintaka Pass (4,827 mtrs)	The two passes were, in ancient times, the two main access points into the Upper Hunza Valley. During ancient times, these passes were the shortest and quickest way into northern India from the Tarim Basin, though regarded as extremely dangerous and only suited for travellers on foot. The Mintaka Pass was the main one used in ancient times but after its glaciation, the Kilik Pass was favoured by caravans as it was free of glaciers and provided pasture for caravan animals. Since the construction of the new Karakoram Highway further south over the Khunjerab Pass, this pass too has fallen out of use.
Mustagh Pass (5,376 mtrs)	Lies across the Baltoro Muztagh in the Karakoram Range. There are actually two passes, the eastern or 'Old' Mustagh Pass (alt. about 5,422 m.) and the so-called 'New' Mustagh Pass, about 16 km to the west (altitude variously given as 5,700 and 5,800 m.) The pass is on the watershed between the rivers which flow towards the Tarim Basin and those flowing to the Indian Ocean. The route across the Mustagh Pass is the shortest route from Yarkand to Skardu.
Thoi Pass (5,008 mtrs)	A high mountain pass that connects Gazin in Yarkhun River valley in Chitral to Nialthi in the Yasin Valley in Ghizer District.
Zagaran Pass (5,005 mtrs)	A high mountain pass that connects Yarkhun River valley in Chitral District to the Gupis valley and lies at the border between Chitral and Gilgit Baltistan.

MAJOR VALLEYS

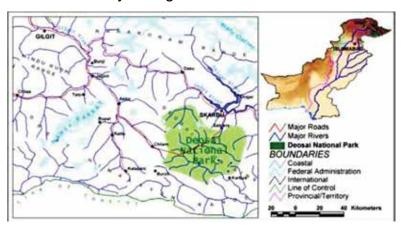
Some of the Valleys in the Gilgit Baltistan Region Are:

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Astore Valley	Astore district comprises of numerous valleys with prominent features being the Nanga Parbat, Rama Lakeand the Deosai Plains.
Diamer Valley	Presently the gateway to Gilgit Baltistan. It is the location of pre-historic rock carvings, inscriptions and petroglyphs. Nanga Parbat and Fairy Meadows are some prominent locations.
Ghanche Valley	About 100 km from Skardu mostly along the Shyok River. Location of the Khaplu Fort Palace and the Chaqchan Mosque, built around 1500 AD with Buddhist influence and Tibetan architecture and is the oldest mosque in Baltistan.
Valleys of Ghizer	Comprises of several independent and isolated valleys including Puniyal, Gupis, Yasin and Ishkoman as distinct features of each. Trout fishing and angling is the most common attraction besides the annual Polo Festival at the famous Shandur Pass.
Gilgit Valley	Gilgit valley is the most important region in the Kara- korum and has been the traditional centre for trade for centuries and an important city on the historical Silk Route, facilitating religions to spread across trans boundaries.
Kargah Valley	Located at a short distance from Gilgit, this is is the location of the Kargah Buddha a rock wall carved Buddha dating back to 8th century AD and ruins of a Buddhist monastery and Stupa.
Hunza and Nagar Valley	The awesome view of four 7,000 m high peaks, i.e., Rakaposhi, Diran, Golden and Ultar, from various points of Hunza valley make it unique. The valley is known for its delicious fruits, terraced fields, land mark monuments and also for its changing colours in various seasons.

Skardu Valley	Skardu district is located at the confluence of river Indus and the Shyok river and makes the base camp for leading tourist destinations in Gilgit Baltistan including K-2.
Bagrote Valley:	Located in the Karakoram Mountain range. The Bagrote riverthat flows through this valley and supports the townships of Jalalabad and Oshikhandass before merging with the Gilgit River. Villages on either side of the valley are linked via cable cars.
Chiporsun Valley	Located at the Northernmost part of the province bordering Afghanistan and China and Tajikistan.
Chorbat Valley	Located in Khaplu tehsil of Ghanche District. The valley is surrounded by high rising peaks of the Karakoram mountain range and the bank the Shyok River.
Hispar Valley	Is the last Valley of Nagar, located about 28 km away from Nagar Khas.
Hopar Valley	Is a scenic portion of the Nagar Valley about 10 km away from Nagar Khas and is the site of the Spantik and Hopar (Hopper) glaciers.
Kharkoo Valley	Located in the Karakorum Mountains along the Shyok River nearby Khaplu Town. Kharkoo is surrounded by greybrown colored mountains, which hide the 8,000 meter peaks of the nearby Karakoram Range.
Ishkoman Valley	High mountain valley in the Hindu Kush and Karakorum mountains bordering Afghanistan and the Pamir Wakhan Corridor.
Kunar Valley	Shared by Gilgit Baltistan and Afghanistan, the valley is arid, rocky, steep landscape with a fastmoving Kunar River that flows South to join the Kabul River.
Khaplu Valley	Located about 100 km from Skardu at the confluence of the Indus and the Shyok Rivers, on the trade route to Ladakh along the Shyok River. Khaplu is the administrative capital of the Ghanche District.
Shandur Plateau	Has a complex of extremely shallow, snowmelt-fed lakes, which are only about 10 feet deep. One of the great bird migration flyways, the plateau is a major grazing ground for sheep, goats and yaks.

<u>Plateaus</u>: Gilgit Baltistan also has some picturesque plateaus, such as the Deosai plateau of glacial origin which is located between Astore and Skardu to the Southwest of the latter.

'Deosai', which means 'the Land of Giants', is known as 'Ghbiarsa' meaning 'Summer Place' in Balti, being accessible only during the summer months.



CLIMATE

The climate of Gilgit Baltistan varies from region to region. Generally, the eastern part has the moist zone of the western Himalayas, but going towards the Karakoram and Hindu Kush, the climate dries considerably.

At an altitude of 1,500 meters Gilgit has a desert climate with warm summers and cold winters. During the summer temperatures above 30 degrees Celsius are uncommon. Winters are cold longer periods with sub-zero temperatures are not uncommon. Precipitation figures are low all year round. During the winter precipitation often falls in the form of snow or hail. There are towns like Gilgit and Chilas that are very hot during the day in summer, yet cold at night, while valleys like Astore, Khaplu, Yasin, Hunza, and Nagar where the temperatures are cold even in summer¹.

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¹http://trulypakistan.com/climate-of-Gilgit Baltistan/

LANGUAGES

Following languages are spoken in Gilgit Baltistan:-

Shina: The main language in Gilgit, it is also spoken in the Diamer, Ghizer and Astore districts. Shina-speaking people are also found north in the Ishkoman valley and in Hunza and Nagar besides further east in Baltistan.

<u>Burushaski</u>: The main language of Hunza valley. It is spoken by the people settled on either sides of the Hunza River, on its northern bank (Hunza) as well as on its southern bank (Nagar). There are also Hunza speaking settlements in Yasin and in Gilgit. Burushaski is still an unwritten language.

<u>Khowar</u>: The main language of Chitral. Khowar speakers are also found in Yasin and in some families of Gilgit on account of marriuage ties. .

<u>Balti</u>: The main language in the Baltistan. Balti peaking people are settled in Skardu, Rondu, Shigar, Khapolu, Kharmang, Gultari and Ganche.

<u>Domaaki</u>: The language of the Domas of Berichos who are also found in Gilgit and in some Shina speaking villages of the lower Hunza valley. The Domas are mainly musicians and smiths.

<u>Wakhi</u>: Wakhi is spoken in Ishkoman valley and in upper Hunza valley. It belongs to the Pamirian branch of Iranian languages.

Gojri: The language of Gojars who are settled in Naltar valley, Kharga and in the surrounding areas of Gilgit.

A small minority of people also speak Pashto, Punjabi and Kashmiri. Urdu and English are the official languages.

RELIGION

Around 75% of the people of these regions adhere to some form of Shia Islam, which is in exact reversal to that obtaining in the rest of Pakistan which illegally occupies these regions.

Of the four major Islamic 'Sects', the Shia, Noorbakshi and Ismailis believe in the Offices of the Imamat runs after the Prophet Mohammad through Ali and his male successors. The Sunnis believe in the office of the Khilafat and according to them Abu baker, Umar, Usman and Ali were the Caliphs after the death of Mohammad.

The **Shias** are the largest sect in Gilgit Baltistan and form a majority in the Gilgit, Skardu and Granche Districts.

The **Sunnis** are the second- largest community in Gilgit Baltistan with overhelming population as adherants in the Diamer District. They are also found in the Districts of Astore, Ghizer, Gilgit and Skardu.

The **Ismailis** are the majority community in the Ghizer District and in some sub division of Hunza.

The **Noorbakshi** Community largely resides in Skardu and Granche

A small number of Christians also reside in Gilgit.

Adherence to past Traditions: Historically, the Baltis practiced Bön and Tibetan Buddhism. Islam arrived in Baltistan via Sufi missionaries Ameer Kabeer Syed Ali Hamadani in the 15th century, and soon Sufism became dominant. The local people however still retain many traits of pre-Islamic Bön and Lamaist rituals. *The Swastika* (*Yung drung*) sign is considered auspicious and is carved on wooden planks that can be seen in historical mosques and Khangahs.

During the 19th century, many Baltis converted to Shi'a and Sunni Islam. However, small pockets of Bön and Tibetan

Buddhist believers still exist in Kharmang valley. Showing respect to the Bon Gods Lha and Lhu (Bön Gods) continues to be customary during village rituals.

The Noorbakshi Tradition: The Noorbakshis, apart from following the Quran and Sunnah also follow the 'Al-Fiqatul Akhwat', 'Usool-e-Etaqadia' and the (Usool-e-Islam) written by Syed Mohammad Nurbakhsh. They are hence named Sufia Noorbakshia. Just as Ahle Sunnat & Ahle Shia, Nurbakhshis fundamentally believe in God, angels, holy books, Mohammed and last day judgment with oral declaration of Kalma-e-Shahadat. They offer prayers five times a day, fast during Ramzan and perform Haj. Nurbakhshis are known as peaceful, tolerable and moderates, who not only respect other Muslim school of thought but also stress upon human beings to behave kindly. Syed Ali Hamdani and Syed Muhammad Nurbakhsh are claimed by both Shia and Sunnis.

Khanqahs: In the Noorbakhshi Mosque (called Khanqah), there are small rooms adjacent to the main Praying Hall which are used for solitary praying (Atikaf). Khanqahs have been using as a central coaching and preaching place by the Noorbakhshia. The students are trained to achieve spiritual purity (Tazkiah) under well-practiced spiritual guides, who have already attained certain degree of spirituality.

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Gilgit Baltistan is home to a number of diversified cultures, ethnic groups, languages and various backgrounds.

Festivities: There are mainly two types of festivals i.e. religious and cultural. Religious festivals include: Eid-e-Ghadir, Edi-ul Fitr and Eid Milad-un-Nabi. The Cultural occasions are Navroz, Jashn-e-Baharan and the Harvest Festival.

The Shandur Polo Festival is held each year in July. There is a belief that the town of Shigar is the birthplace of this Royal sport. Shandur was till recently the highest polo ground in

the world at 12,263 feet, a distinction that has since shifted to Babusar at 13,599 feet (located on the Babusar pass connecting Diamer valley to Khagan in ther KPK province.

<u>Dance</u>: The dances that are common during the festivals, traditional events and ceremonies are the **Old Man Dance**, performed by men wearing old style of dresses, the **Sword Dance** in which the participants hold a sword in one hand and a shield in the other and mock fight with a partner and the **Cow Boy Dance** (Payaloo) dance in which a person wears an old style dress, long leather shoes and dances with a stick in hand.

<u>Music</u>: The famous trio band music is played in this region. On the rhythm of loud music, men dance in a typical way. There are some variations in lyrics from region to region.

<u>Traditional Music</u>: The instruments commonly used in Gilgit Baltistan are the Dadang (drum), the Damal and the Surnai while some other instruments like Sitar, Gabi(Flute) Rabab and Duff are played in some areas. In Baltistan, the khiling-boo. chang, porgho-too are played.

<u>Alghani</u>: The people of Gilgit, Ghizer Yasin, Puniyal, and Gupis play a rhythm they call Alghani to celebrate a happy occasion.

<u>Ajoli</u>: A rhythm used during departure of bride and groom from the house.

Souse: A martial rhythm that has a fast rhythm and is used specially in sword dances.

<u>Dani</u>: The traditional music of Hunza which links it to Tibet, Baltistan and Ladakh.

WILDLIFE & NATURE

Gilgit Baltistan is rich with large mineral deposits of Nickel, Cobalt, Copper, Lead, Tin, Bismuth, Mica, Quartz, Zircon, Coal and Actonolite. It also has substantial resources of Iron, Silver, Gold, Zinc, Marble, Granite, Sulpher, Calsite, Fluorite, Lime Stone, Arsenic, Spinel, Garmet, Epidot, Topaz, Moon Stone, Pargasite, Tourmoline, Aquamarin, Pyrite and feldspar. The region is also a producer of stone jewellery which are exported, as are the dry fruits produced here.

Beef and poultry farming in the region is well developed. Improved road and network communications have enhanced potential for further economic development.

Hydro power is another sector where there is enormous potential. Gilgit Baltistan has a small but growing industrial base, producing manufactured goods. The major 'industry' of the regions remains tourism. While the CPEC is touted to vastly improve their lives, the people of the Gilgit and Baltistan regions have been protesting against China and the multibillion dollar Project which passes through the regions for several reasons. Besides the fear that the project would create a huge ecological imbalance, a large number of people in the region have been displaced as their houses have been demolished and farm lands acquired for the CPEC project for which no compensation for lands acquired has been yet made. Next, though in all roads and pipelines crossing into China from Pakistan are to pass through these regions, not a single Special Economic Zone is being set up here to support the local residents. People of both regions also fear that the multi-billion dollar project will hardly benefit them and is a deliberate attempt to change the demography of the regions.

THE ECONOMY OF GILGIT BALTISTAN

Gilgit Baltistan is rich with large mineral deposits of Nickel, Cobalt, Copper, Lead, Tin, Bismuth, Mica, Quartz, Zircon, Coal and Actonolite. It also has substantial resources of Iron, Silver, Gold, Zinc, Marble, Granite, Sulpher, Calsite, Fluorite, Lime Stone, Arsenic, Spinel, Garmet, Epidot, Topaz, Moon Stone,

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Agriculture Sector: As over 90% of the population is engaged in agriculture, the sector holds a very important place for Gilgit Baltistan's growth and poverty reduction. Due to its seasonal and elevation advantages, there has been a move towards production of higher value cash crops like fruits and vegetables, apricot and potato being the largest in terms of area and production. A number of pilot projects by USAID, JICA, AKRSP and ASF have demonstrated the potential for improved returns for farmers through improved agriculture products, value addition, processing and marketing. However, these pilots are yet to be taken to a scale due to existing limitations in terms of low productivity and scattered production, high postharvest losses, limited irrigated lands, inadequate extension and research support, poor road access and disconnects between public sector, private sector and farmers/producers. Gilgit Baltistan currently produces 169,000 tons of fresh and dry fruits out of which only 10,119 is being marketed in mostly low end markets and a huge volume equal to 57,178 tons is wasted due to issues along the value chain. Similarly, in vegetables, against the production of 152,000 tons, around 12,000 tons goes waste. In short, the region's rural economy suffers from the classic triad of challenges i.e. density, distances and division and needs an integrated solution involving institutions, infrastructure and incentives.2

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²Economic Transformation Initiative Gilgit Baltistan - Programme Design Report march 2015@https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/114/docs/EB-2015-114-R-14-Project-design-report.pdf

Gems of Gilgit Baltistan: A large variety of minerals including peridot, emerald, aquamarine, tourmaline, topaz, ruby, sapphire, garnet, red spinal, pargasite, actinolite, diopside, epidote, vesuvianite, axinite, rodingite, sphene, fluorite, apatite, zircon, rutile, azurite, moonstone, ametrvst, rose quartz and agate are found in the region. The three mountain ranges that form Gilgit Baltistan were formed as result of two collisions between India and Asia that occurred between 100 and 50 Ma (million years) ago. These collusions induced crustal thickening that resulted in metamorphism and multiple phases of deformation in these rocks. This was followed by the emplacement of leucogranites and associated pegmatites which geological processes have produced a distinctive mineral kingdom within Gilgit Baltistan. Most of the gemstones are pegmatite-related, such as aquamarine, tourmaline, topaz, garnet, and apatite. Some of the gemstones are hydrothermal and /or metamorphic in genesis such as emerald, ruby, sapphire, pargasite, rutile, azurite and pink topaz. The pegmatites are generally composed of feldspar (albite and microcline), quartz, biotite, muscovite and tourmaline.

The important gemstones of Gilgit Baltistan are:

Aquamarine: Gilgit is centre for the blue variety of beryl. The aquamarine of the region has light green and blue coloration, and the crystals are well shaped. Large and matchless specimens of aquamarine (about 10 Kg in weight and 40 cm long) are usually associated with apatite or fluro-apatite, topaz, gem garnet, and sheaths of muscovite, is the specialty of the region.



Figure 6: A large Aquamarine crystal found in Gilgit

Ruby: Extensive belt of more than 100 Km in the Hunza Valley.

<u>Tourmaline</u>: Found in Stak, Bulechi and Shingus areas of Gilgit District.

Topaz: Gilgit and Skardu Districts.

<u>Aesthetic Crystals</u>: Haramosh mountains.

THE DIAMER BASHA DAM

The Diamer-Bhasha Dam —to be the world's highest Roller Compacted Concrete Dam, is located on Indus River, about 315 km upstream of Tarbela Dam, 165 km downstream of the Northern Area capital Gilgit and 40 km downstream of Chilas. The proposed dam would have a maximum height of 270 m, and impound a reservoir of about 7,500,000 acre feet (9.25×109 m3), with live storage of more than 6,400,000 acre feet (7.89×109 m3). Mean annual discharge of Indus River at the site is 50,000,000 acre feet (6.2×1010 m3). Thus the dam will impound 15% of the annual river flow. The dam project would cover an area of 110 km2 and extend 100 km upstream of the damsite up to Raikot Bridge on Karakoram Highway. The Diamer Basha Dam is under consideration for inclusion as a CPEC Project where after its construction would be funded by China.

Project Benefits

- Availability of about 6,400,000 acre feet (7.89×109 m3) annual surface face water storage for supplementing irrigation supplies during low flow periods
- Harnessing of renewable source of clean and cheap energy through installed capacity of 4500 MW
- Reduction of dependence on thermal power, thus saving foreign exchange
- Employment opportunity, particularly to the locals,

during the construction and operation

 Creation of massive infrastructure leading to overall socio-economic uplift of the area and standard of living of people.

(Alarge number of Buddhist artefacts have been recovered at the site of the Diamer-Basha Dam. It has been decided to secure and relocate all items of archaeological significance from the areas that will be inundated by the Diamer-Bhasha Dam and its reservoir and to place them in a newly constructed museum near the Dam site).

<u>ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS</u>



ASTORE		
Geographical Area	5411 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	0.114 Mn	
Ethnic Groups	Yashkun, Sheen, Wakhi	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 70%, Shia 30%	
Language	Shina, Urdu	

According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India, around 1600, one "Ghāzī Mukhpun, a Persian adventurer, is said to have married a princess of the Skārdu reigning family. The four sons born of this union became Rās of Skārdu, Astor, Rondu, and Kharmang respectively, and from them are descended the families of the present chiefs of those places. Afzal, Guada, Chilma respectively was sons of Astor.

The independence of Astor ceased with the Dogra conquest. In 2004, Astore separated from Diamer to become an independent District.

DIAMER		
Geographical Area	7234 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	0.214	
Ethnic Groups	Yashkun, Sheen, Others	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 100%	
Language	Shina	

The major project of the district is the Diamer-Bhasha Dam, a gravity dam in the preliminary stages of construction, on the River Indus the foundation stone for which was laid on 18 October 2011, Upon completion, Diamer-Bhasha Dam would be the highest RCC dam in the world. The dam site is situated near a place called "Bhasha" in Gilgit Baltistan's Diamer District, hence the name. The dam is under consideration for inclusion amongst CPEC Projects.

The Gilgit Baltistan government has decided to allocate a substantial piece of land to Pakistan Army in Diamer district so it can set up headquarters and ensure security for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The site is situated in Thak Das, a barren piece of land near Chilas, where a brigade will be stationed.

GHANCHE		
Geographical Area	8531 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	0.108	
Ethnic Groups	Balti	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 23%; Shia: 2%; N/ bakshi 75%	
Language	Balti	

The easternmost district of Gilgit—Baltistan. The word Gangchay is Balti and means "glacier". It is locally used by natives for the Shyok river which flows the length of Khaplu town.

The Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) at the easternmost part of Ghanche District.

This region is also called the "Third Pole" with temperatures reaching below -20 °C in the winter.

GHIZER		
Geographical Area	12381 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	0.190	
Ethnic Groups	Yashkun, Others	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 10%; Shia: 5%; Is- maili:85%	
Language	Shina, Khowar and Buru- shaski. Wakhi, Tajiks.	

Located in the westernmost part of the Gilgit Baltistan region of Pakistan. Its capital is Gahkuch. Ghizer is a distorted form of the name "Gherz" which means "refugees" in Khowar. Ghizer is at the crossroads between Gilgit and Chitral and also to China, Tajikistan via the Karambar Pass and is a multi-ethnic district where three major languages are spoken.

GILGIT		
Geographical Area	4208 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	0.222	
Ethnic Groups	Yashkun, Sheen, Mughal, Wakhi, Gujar	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 35%; Shia: 45%; Ismaili: 19.5%; N/Bakhshi: 0.5%	
Language	Shina, Domaki	

Gilgit District includes Gilgit town, Bagrot Valley, Juglot, Danyore, Naltar, and Nomal.

Towering above Gilgit is Mount Rakaposhi at 7,788 metres (25,551 ft). The highest peak in the district however is Distaghil Sar 7,885 metres (25,869 ft).

HUNZA		
Geographical Area	10,700 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)		
Ethnic Groups	Yashkun, Sheen, Mughal,	
	Wakhi, Gujar	
Religious Sects	Shia 55%; Ismaili 45%	
Language	Wakhi, Tajiki.	

The land of the Hunza people who are ethnically Burusho people indigenous to the Hunza Valley. A popular belief among some Burusho clans is that they are the descendants of the Macedonian soldiers who came to the region with Alexander the Great's army in the 4th century BC. Upper Hunza locally called Gojal, is inhabited by people whose ancestors moved up from proper Hunza in an effort to irrigate and defend the bordering lands with China and Afghanistan. Local legend states that Hunza may have been associated with the lost kingdom of Shangri-La

KHARMANG		
Geographical Area	5500 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	NA	
Ethnic Groups	Balti	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 10%; Shia: 5%; Is- maili:85%	
Language	Balti	

The Kharmang Valley is one of the five biggest valleys of Baltistan; recently it became a district, whose headquarters is Tolti. The valley is located about 100 km from the capital city of Baltistan Skardu. Kharmang District borders Kargil district and its largest village, Olding Kharmang is located near Kargil town.

NAGAR		
Geographical Area	5000 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	NA	
Ethnic Groups	Yashkun, Sheen, Mughal,	
	Wakhi, Gujar	
Religious Sects	Shia 55%; Ismaili 45%	
Language	Burushaski, Shina.	

Is a new District that has been carved out of the erstwhile Hunza Nagar District in 2015. An older type of Burushaski is still spoken in the valley with a mild modern accent. A third language, Bedeski, is also still spoken in Chalt Nagar. The terrain of Nagar is extremely mountainous, which provided a certain degree of protection against invading forces. The highest mountain is the 7,788 m (25,551 ft) Mount Rakaposhi, south of the town of Nagar. The Karakoram Highway crosses Nagar, connecting Pakistan with China via the Khunjerab Pass. The road follows the Hunza river for some distance through Nagar and into the Hunza region.

SHIGAR		
Geographical Area	8500 Sq km.	
Population 2013 (estimated)	NA	
Ethnic Groups	Balti	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 10%; Shia: 5%; Is-	
	maili:85%	
Language	Balti	

Shigar is a town in the Baltistan division of Gilgit–Baltistan near Skardu and is located near the Shigar River.

The town is inhabited mostly by Balti people of Tibetan descent and has several buildings of architectural relevance to the Noorbakshi Sufi Sect. Shigar Fort, the Amburik and Khilingrong Mosques, the Khanqah e Muallah Shigar, Hashoo pi Bhag, Marapi Ranga, the Ree Masjid and the Astana of Syed Mir Yahya are the popular places to visit. Shigar valley is very fertile and rich in fruits.

SKARDU		
Geographical Area	19697	
Population 2013 (estimated)	0.305	
Ethnic Groups	Sheen, Balti	
Religious Sects	Sunni: 6%; Shia: 88%; N/ Bakshi: 6%	
Language	Shina, Balti	

The name "Skardu" is believed to be derived from the Tibetan word for "stony meteorite.

Most part of the Deosai Plateau and the Deosai national Park is located in this District.

Along with Gilgit, Skardu is a major tourism, trekking and expedition hub in Gilgit—Baltistan. (The mountainous terrain of the region, which includes four of the world's 14 Eight-thousander peaks, attracts tourists, trekkers and mountaineers from around the world. The main tourist season is from April to October).

HISTORICAL BACKDROP

Gilgit has been an important staging post on the traditional Silk Road as also on the Buddhism corridor along which the religion spread from India to China and the rest of Asia. It is through this route that many Chinese monks and scholars came to Kashmir, then a prominent centre of the religion, to learn and preach Buddhism. Owing to its location on the intersection of the Silk Road, Gilgit Baltistan has received cultural influences and cross-cultural contacts for centuries with China, Central Asia, Tibet, Afghanistan and the rest of India. Explorations have brought to surface rock carvings in more than 10 languages, graves and wooden structures that depict the antiquity and cultural diversity of the region.

<u>Mention in Ancient Texts</u>: "The region of Gilgit and Baltistan was known as *Daradadesa* (Land of the Dards) in old texts as in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*. Its people are said to have

played an important role in the history of Kashmir. According to the Tibetan Historian Taranatha, the route between it and Kashmir was opened by Buddhist pilgrims and missionaries who reached Kashmir with and following Madhyantika the emissary of Moggaliputta Tissa at the time of Ashoka the Great. The Dards also find mention by Ptolemy and along with the Shinas are mentioned in old Pauranic lists of peoples.

Fa Hein's Accounts: The Chinese traveller Fa Hein's noticed that the region was studded with monasteries (Sangharamas), their number being no less than five hundred, where the newcomers were provided with all necessities for three days. The Buddha is said to have visited the region and left his footprint there which was highly venerated. Passing through Soo-ho-to (Swastene), the pilgrims reached Gandhara and were in Takshashila".3

The Kargah Buddha: A rock statue of Buddha, is located near

Kargah Nallah, a ravine and is 10 kilometres from Gilgit Town and is now a popular evening spot.

The **Jatakamala** manuscripts: In 1931, a corpus of manuscripts dating back to the 5th Century were discovered in Gilgit that



contained several Buddhist texts particularly the four Sutras including the Padma Sutra that were written on bark in the Sharada script and covered a wide range of themes ranging from folk tales, philosophy and medicine. These 'Gilgit

³Gilgit in Ancient Times by Buddha Prakash @http://himalaya.socanth.cam. ac.uk/collections/journals/bot/pdf/bot 07 03 02.pdf

manuscripts' are amongst the oldest of such manuscripts in the world and throw light on the evolution and state of Buddhism of the time.

MEDIEVAL TIMES AND ONWARDS

For purposes of this analysis, a historical perspective commencing in the medieval times is suffice. Till around the 14th century, Gilgit was ruled by Hindu dynasties who held the title of 'Ra'. There is no account available of the earlier Hindu Ras except for Sri Buddutt, the last Hindu Ra who was assassinated by a Muslim adventurer, Azur⁴ Jamshid (also known as Shamsher), hailed to be a scion of an Iranian Royal dynasty, who secretly married Sri Buddutt's daughter and founded a new dynasty, called Trakhàn. Reference is merited to the Sri Buddutt who had the reputation of being an "Adam Khor" (literally man-eater), who demanded a child a day from his subjects. His demise is still celebrated by locals with a Juniper procession by the river to mark the chasing away of the cannibal king.

Azur Jamshid abdicated after 16 years of rule in favour of his wife Nur Bakht Khatùn until their son and heir Garg, grew of age and assumed the title of Raja and reigned thereafter for 55 years. The dynasty flourished under the name of the Kayani dynasty until 1421 when Raja Torra Khan became the Ruler. His long reign upto 1475 is regarded as a memorable one. The Trakhan dynasty's rule ended in out 1810 with the death of Raja Abas, the last Trakhan ruler.

The 19th and early 20th Centuries

After the death of Raja Abas, Gilgit was conquered by Sulaiman Shah, the Raja of Yasin but was soon taken by Azad Khan the Raja of Punyal who killed Sulaiman Shah, but

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⁴ Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh by Maj John Biddulph @ https://www.scribd.com/document/243029254/Tribes-of-the-Hindoo-Koosh-1880-by-Major-J-Biddulph

was himself killed by Tair Shah, Raja of Buroshall (Nagar). Gilgit thereby came to be inherited by Tair Shah's son Shah Sikandar who in turn was killed by Gohar Aman, Raja of Yasin of the Khushwakhte Dynasty.

In 1841, Gilgit was deluged by a great flood in which the river Indus was blocked by a landslip below the Hatu Pir and turned the valley into a lake.

Karim Khan's Rule with Support of Sikh Garrison: In 1842, Shah Sakandar's brother, Karim Khan, expelled the Yasin rulers with the support of a Sikh army from Kashmir. Nathu Shah, the Sikh General left a large garrison of troops at Gilgit with whose support Karim Khan ruled until 1846.

Treaty of Amritsar: Thereafter, by the Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, Gilgit was ceded to Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu and Kashmir. Nathu Shah and Karim Khan both transferred their allegiance to Gulab Singh and continued to execute the local administration. The Sikh troops were however replaced by Dogra troops. In a Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries compiled by C.U. Aitchison, Under-Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department (Volume XI of the 1909 edition), wrote: "The present State of Jammu and Kashmir was created by the British government when Gulab Singh was established as Maharaja under the Treaty of Amritsar." The British first signed the Treaty of Lahore with the Lahore State on 9 March 1846 after the First Anglo-Sikh war, and acquired "in perpetual sovereignty" inter alia the province of Kashmir. This was in part-payment of the equivalent of "one crore of rupees" which the British demanded as "indemnification for the war expenses."

J&K Ceded to Maharaja Gulab Singh: A week later, on 16 March 1846, the British ceded to Maharaja Gulab Singh the lands it had thus acquired – the territories of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh "for the sum of seventy-five lakhs of rupees."

Gulab Singh on his part, "acknowledged the supremacy of the British government." Article 4 of the Treaty of Amritsar states that "The limits of the territories of Maharaja Gulab Singh shall not be at any time changed without concurrence of the British government."

Treaty of Amritsar March 16, 1846

The treaty between the British Government on the one part and Maharajah Gulab Singh of Jammu on the other concluded on the part of the British Government by Frederick Currie, Esq. and Brevet-Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the orders of the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Hardinge, G.C.B., one of her Britannic Majesty's most Honorable Privy Council, Governor-General of the possessions of the East India Company, to direct and control all the affairs in the East Indies and by Maharajah Gulab Singh in person - 1846.

Article 1 The British Government transfers and makes over for ever in independent possession to Maharajah Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the River Indus and the westward of the River Ravi including Chamba and excluding Lahol, being part of the territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State according to the provisions of Article IV of the Treaty of Lahore, dated 9 March 1846.

Article 2 The eastern boundary of the tract transferred by the foregoing article to Maharajah Gulab Singh shall be laid down by the Commissioners appointed by the British Government and Maharajah Gulab Singh respectively for that purpose and shall be defined in a separate engagement after survey.

Article 3 In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing article Maharajah Gulab Singh will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy-five lakhs of rupees (Nanukshahee), fifty lakhs to be paid on or before the 1st October of the current year, A.D., 1846.

Article 4 The limits of territories of Maharajah Gulab Singh shall not be at any time changed without concurrence of the British Government.

Article 5 Maharajah Gulab Singh will refer to the arbitration of the British Government any disputes or question that may arise between himself and the Government of Lahore or any other neighboring State, and will abide by the decision of the British Government.

Article 6 Maharajah Gulab Singh engages for himself and heirs to join, with the whole of his Military Forces, the British troops when employed within the hills or in the territories adjoining his possessions.

Article 7 Maharajah Gulab Singh engages never to take to retain in his service any British subject nor the subject of any European or American State without the consent of the British Government.

Article 8 Maharajah Gulab Singh engages to respect in regard to the territory transferred to him, the provisions of Articles V, VI and VII of the separate Engagement between the British Government and the Lahore Durbar, dated 11 March 1846.

Article 9 The British Government will give its aid to Maharajah Gulab Singh in protecting his territories from external enemies.

Article 10 Maharajah Gulab Singh acknowledges the supremacy of the British Government and will in token of such supremacy present annually to the British Government one horse, twelve shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female) and three pairs of Cashmere shawls.

This Treaty of ten articles has been this day settled by Frederick Currie, Esq. and Brever-Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under directions of the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Hardinge, Governor-General, on the part of the British Government and by Maharajah Gulab Singh in person, and the said Treaty has been this day ratified by the seal of the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Hardinge, Governor-General. Done at Amritsar the sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-six, corresponding with the seventeenth day of Rubee-ul-Awal (1262 Hijri).

(Signed) H. Hardinge (Seal) (Signed) F. Currie (Signed) H. M. Lawre

The Ladakhi Letter of Agreement and the Tibetan Letter of Agreement, 1842: These were signed by Ladakh and Tibet and were more commitments of non-aggression rather than boundary treaty. They however marked the conclusion of Zorawar Singh's ambitious Dogra venture with Tibet. The Persian text in Tibet's possessions reads: "We shall remain in possession of the limits of boundaries of Ladakh and the neighbours subordinate to it, in accordance with the old customs, and there shall be no transgression and no interference in the country beyond the old- established frontiers" (emphasis added, throughout). The Tibetan text in Kashmir's possession conveys the same.

TIBETAN LETTER OF AGREEMENT, 1842

This agreement is made in the interests of the friendship between the Lhasa authorities and Shri Maharajah Sahib and Maharajah Gulab Singh. On the thirteenth day of the eighth month of the Water-Tiger year (September 17, 1842), the Lhasa representative Surkang, investigator Kalon Dapon Peshi, Shri Raja Sahib Dewan Hari Chand and Wazir Ratun Sahib, the representatives of Shri Maharajah Sahib, sat together amicably with Kunchok (God) as witness. This document has been drawn up to ensure the lasting friendship of the Tibetans and the Ladakhis. We have agreed not to harm each other in any way and to look after the

LADAKHI LETTER OF AGREEMENT, 1842

Translations of the original letters written in Tibetan

Shri Khalsaji Apsarani Shri Maharajah; Lhasa representative Surkang; investigator Kalon Dapon Peshi, commander of forces; Balana, the representative of Gulam Kahandin; and the interpreter Amir Shah, have written this letter after sitting together. We have agreed that we have no ill-feeling because of the past war. The two kings will henceforth remain friends forever. The relationship between Maharajah Gulab Singh Kashmir and the Lama Guru of Lhasa (Dalai Lama) is now established. Maharajah The

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⁵India and China Facts of History by AG Noorani FRONTLINE Volume 20 - Issue 18, August 30 - September 12, 2003.

interests of our own territories. We agree to continue trading in tea and cloth on the same terms as in the past, and do not harm Ladakhi traders coming into Tibet. If any of our subjects stray into your country, they should not be protected. We will forget past difference between the Lhasa authority and Shri Maharajah. The agreement arrived at today will remain firmly established forever. Kunchok (God), mount Kailash, Lake Manasarowar, and Khochag Jowo have been called as witnesses to this treaty.

Sealed by Kalon Surkhang and Dapon Peshi

Source: W. D. Shakabpa, Tibet: A Political History (New Haven, 1967), pp. 327-328

God Sahib. with (Kunchok) as his witness, promised to recognize ancient boundaries, which should be looked after by each side without resorting to warfare. When the descendants of the early kings, who fled from Ladakh to Tibet, now return, they will be restored to their former stations. The annual envoy from Ladakh to Lhasa will not be stopped by Shri Maharajah. Trade between Ladakh and Tibet will continue as usual. Tibetan government traders coming into Ladakh will receive free transport and accommodations as before. and the Ladakhi envoy will, in turn, receive the same facilities in Lhasa.

The Ladakhis take an oath before God (Kunchok) that they will not intrigue or reate new troubles in Tibetan territory. We have agreed with God as witness, that Shri Maharajah Sahib and the Lama Guru of Lhasa (Dalai Lama) will live together as members of the same household. We have written the above on the second of Assura, Sambvat 1899 (17 September 1842).

Sealed by the Wazir, Dewan, Balana, and Amir Shah.

Treaty between the Sikhs and Chinese (1842): On 17 October 1842, the Sikhs and the Chinese concluded a treaty which said (Article1): "That the boundaries of Ladakh and Lhassa shall be constituted as formerly, the contracting parties engaging to confine themselves within their respective boundaries, the one to refrain from any act of aggression on the other"

Hunza Aggression of Gilgit (1848): Gilgit was attacked by Hunza in 1848 and both Nathu Shah and Karim Khan were killed but the State was soon re-conquered by Gulab Singh's Dogra troops.

Gilgit Revolt (1852): In 1852, Gilgit's inhabitants rose in revolt against their new rulers supported by Raja Gohar Aman who assumed power and ruled the state thereafter until his death in 1860.

<u>Dogra Recapture of Gilgit (1860)</u>: In 1860, the Dogra forces of Ranbir Singh, the son of Gulab Singh, captured Gilgit fort and town.

Gilgit Agency established (1877): In order to guard against the advance of Russia, the British India Government, acting as the suzerain power of the princely state of Jammu Kashmir, established the Gilgit Agency in 1877. The Agency was reestablished under control of the British Resident in Jammu and Kashmir. It comprised the Gilgit Wazarat; the State of Hunza and Nagar; the Punial Jagir; the Governorships of Yasin, Kuh-Ghizr and Ishkoman, and Chilas.

<u>Conquest of Hunza (1891)</u>: In 1891-92, after furious battles at Nilt and Thol, the British Indian Army conquered Hunza, Nagar and Gilgit, thus bringing the whole area under the British Raj. During the period 1890-1935, the Gilgit Agency

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⁶(An 'Agreed' Frontier: Ladakh and India's Northernmost Borders 1846-1947) by Parashotam Mehra: Oxford University Press, 1991; pp. 167-170).

formed by the British brought all the four sub-units of the region i.e., Gilgit, Ladakh, Skardu and Kargil under one single administration.

Gilgit Agency 'Leased' to the British (1935): The British India government fearing Soviet expansionist moves, in 1935, sought to have direct control in the region and demanded from the Jammu and Kashmir state to lease them Gilgit town plus most of the Gilgit Agency and the hill-states Hunza, Nagar, Yasin and Ishkoman for 60 years. Maharaja Hari Singh had no choice but to acquiesce. The leased region was then treated as part of British India, administered by a Political Agent at Gilgit responsible to Delhi, first through the Resident in Jammu and Kashmir and later a British Agent in Peshawar. During this period the Jammu and Kashmir State flag remained hoisted over residency along with the Union Jack. Jammu and Kashmir State no longer kept troops in Gilgit and a mercenary force, the Gilgit Scouts, was recruited with British officers and paid for by Delhi. This lease was, however, terminated in July 1947.

Gilgit Agency Lease Retroceded (01 Aug 1947): In April 1947, Delhi decided to formally retrocede the leased areas to Hari Singh's Jammu and Kashmir State as of 15 August 1947. The transfer was to formally take place on 1 August.

Gilgit Scouts Mutiny (01 Nov 1947): A mutiny by the Gilgit Scouts battalion under the guidance of Major WA 'Willie' Brown however rebelled against this action and the new Governor was arrested. Gilgit thereafter came under the effective control of Pakistan.

Mahatma Gandhi visited Srinagar on 01 Aug 1947 to find the city lit up in the midst of celebrations, quite in contrast to the violence in other parts of the country. He was informed that the rejoicing was for the return of Gilgit Agency to the J&K State by the British who had taken control of the province on a 60 year lease in 1935.

Gandhiji's observation then was that it would be better if Gilgit was awarded local area autonomy to govern itself and to preserve its traditional ways. Maharaja Hari Singh however chose not to take that advice and despatched Maj Gen Ghansara Singh to be Governor of Gilgit. On 30 July 1947, the Administration of Gilgit was transferred from the British to Governor Ghansara Singh of Kashmir.

Datta Khel: The region's security was the responsibility of a military force called the Gilgit Scouts, which was officered by the British. Sensing an opportunity in the Maharaja's predicament, Major William Brown, the Maharaja's commander of the Gilgit Scouts, mutinied on 1 November 1947 and overthrew the Governor Ghansara Singh. The bloodless coup d'état was planned by Brown to the last detail under the code name `Datta Khel'.Two officers of the Gilgit Scouts, Major W A Brown himself and one Captain A S Mathieson, along with Subedar Major Babar Khan, a relative of the Mir of Hunza, were loaned to the Maharaja at Gilgit. But soon after Maharaja Hari Singh signed Kashmir's accession to India, Major Brown imprisoned Ghansara Singh, and informed his erstwhile British Political Agent, Lt Colonel Roger Bacon, who was then at Peshawar, of the accession of Gilgit to Pakistan. On November 2, Major Brown officially raised the Pakistani flag at his headquarters, and claimed that he and Mathieson had opted for service with Pakistan when the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession in favour of India.

Aburi Hakoomat: A provisional government (Aburi Hakoomat) was established by the Gilgit locals with Raja Shah Rais Khan as the President and Mirza Hassan Khan as the commander-in-chief. Two weeks later, a nominee of the Pakistan government, Sardar Mohammed Alam, was appointed the Political Agent, and took possession of the territory. Pakistani army soldiers and tribals used it as a base to launch attacks on the other towns and cities of the region like Skardu, Dras, Kargil and Leh. On hearing of Brown's coup in Gilgit, Sir George Cunningham, who had been appointed governor

of North-West Frontier Province, instructed him to restore order, giving Pakistan de facto control of the region.

Significantly, In the 1948 British gazette, the King-Emperor awarded the "Most Exalted Order of the British Empire to Brown, Major (acting) William Alexander, Special List (ex-Indian Army)".

JAMMU & KASHMIR BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

Before Independence, Jammu and Kashmir State had a total area of 84471 square miles and was geographically divided into three regions-Jammu Province (12,378 sq. miles), Kashmir Province (8,539 sq.) and the Frontier Province of Ladakh and Gilgit (63,554 sq miles). In 1947, portions of the State came under illegal occupation of Pakistan (this included 5134 sq miles in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir and 29,814 square miles chunk of the Frontier Province of Ladakh and Gilgit earlier called Northern Areas and now form the province of Gilgit Baltistan.

Historically the Gilgit - Baltistan region belonged to the Dogra kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir.

State elections were held in 1934, 1937 and 1941, and five representatives of these areas were taken in the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly. The Area was represented even in the last State assembly, which terminated in 1947.

ADMINISTRATION UNDER ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF PAKISTAN

After the coup by the troops of the Gilgit Scouts on 01 Nov 1947, an interim government constituted under Raja Shah Rais Khan of Gilgit and the government of Pakistan was invited to take control of the areas through a telegram. Sardar Muhammad Alam (A tehsildar in the NWFP government at that time) was appointed as the Political Agent of the government of Pakistan.

In April 1949, an agreement was reached between the Government of Pakistan and Government of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. According to this Agreement (sub-clause 8 of Section 3), administrative control of Gilgit and Baltistan was temporarily transferred to the government of Pakistan. The affairs of Gilgit and Baltistan thereby came under the control of Political Agent appointed by the government of Pakistan.

However, while the Map of the state of Jammu and Kashmir published by the Pakistan's Ministry of Kashmir Affairs in February 1954 shows Gilgit and Baltistan both in terms of area and population, as part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the Maps published by Survey of Pakistan continued to show the Northern Areas as part of PoK even up to 1987.⁷

After Sardar Muhammad Alam's assumption as Political Agent of Pakistan in November 1947, the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) were enforced over whole of Northern Areas. This was the English law for the tribal areas through which a civil servant exercised all judicial and administrative powers. (This was a major change from the time of the rule of the Maharaja of Kashmir in whose times, an independent judicial system existed for the areas with a provision for appeal before the Kashmir High Court). The FCR (Frontier Crimes Regulations) that remained in force 25 years until 1972 when they was belatedly lifted at the instance of the then Prime Minister Z.A. Bhutto.

Initially, the Political Agent was also placed under the Political Resident of the NWFP. In Í950, the affairs of the Northern Areas were brought under the administrative control of **Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas**. A post of Political Resident was created in place of the Political Agent. In 1952, a Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs was appointed Resident for the Northern Areas. Under the

⁷His Masters Voice by Bhushan Parimoo @ http://www.earlytimes.in/m/news-det.aspx?q=185555

Resident, there were two Political Agents, one each for Gilgit and Baltistan agencies. However, the administrative and judicial authorities remained centralized in the position of the Resident and there was no System brought in place for any political representation.

Significantly, the geographic details and explanation of the areas under Pakistan, as given in the Constitutions of 1956, 1962 and 1973, do not cover Northern Areas as part of Pakistan. When Martial Law was imposed in 1958, it was not extended to Northern Areas, because according to the principle stand of Pakistan, these areas (still) did not belong to Pakistan.

Sinkiang (Xinjiang) - Kashmir Border Agreement (1963): On March 2, 1963, certain areas were mutually transferred by adjustment. The agreement contained a clause (article 6) that after the Kashmir dispute was resolved, the government in power in Northern Areas and the People's Republic of China will re-negotiate the agreement. India lodged protest against the Sino-Pak Agreement. Taking the stand that the agreement was a violation of the resolutions of the Security Council and the U.N. Commission for India-Pakistan. Pakistan's position has been that Northern Areas were an integrated part of the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir, and their fate is yet to be decided along with the rest of the State, through a plebiscite as provided in the U.N. resolutions.

Empowerment of Resident (1967): The Ministry of Kashmir Affairs introduced reforms by transferring powers of High Court and Revenue Commissioner to the Resident and appointed two Political Agent one each for Gilgit and Baltistan. District level powers delegated to the Political Agent to act as District and Session Judge, Revenue Collector, Commissioner for FCR, Chief of Police and Controlling Officer of Cooperative Society.

<u>Establishment of Representative Body of Northern Areas</u> (1970): Elections were conducted for the first time in the Gilgit Baltistan Regions to elect 16 members of Northern Areas Advisory Council (NAAC).

While the Council had the power to sanction development schemes and all other matters were beyond its powers. Initially, the Council was chaired by the Resident but later, the Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs became Chairman of the Council.

Re-designation of the post of Resident as Resident Commissioner (1972): Through a Presidential Order of 1972, the post of Resident was re-designated as Resident Commissioner of Gilgit and Baltistan Agencies were transformed into districts by appointing Deputy Commissioners along with creating an additional district of Diamer.

The Z.A Bhutto Reforms (1972): The government of Z. A. Bhutto announced a package of administrative and judicial reforms by abolishing the State of Hunza and Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR). The Presidential proclamation of August 1972, introduced the following fundamental structural reforms:

- (a) The system of Feudal Lords, Rajas, Mir of Nagar and Agency was abolished. (The Rajas (rulers) of abolished States were given government jobs and maintenance allowances).
- (b) Gilgit and Baltistan agencies were given the status of districts;
- (c) "Resident" and "Political Agent" were re-named Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, respectively.
- (d) A general amnesty was granted.
- (e) Creation of two additional districts Ghizer and Ganche was announced.

Abolition of the State of Hunza and creation of Two new Districts (1974): In September 1974, Prime Minister Bhutto visited Northern Areas and declared Ganche and Ghazar as two new districts and abolished the state of Hunza.

Imposition of Martial Law and being placed in Zone 'E' (1977): When General Zia-ul -Haq imposed Martial Law in Pakistan the Gilgit Baltistanwas declared as Zone-E and imposed Martial Law in the area. This was the first major step towards the deviation of Pakistan's stand about on Gilgit Baltistan with regard to Kashmir issue. The representatives from the Area were included in the Majlis-e-Shura.

Zia-ul-Haq's Changed Stance on Northern Areas (1982): In April 1982, the then President of Pakistan, Gen Zia-ul-haq stated that Gilgit, Skardu and Hunza were not "disputed" areas, but part of Pakistan. On 09 May 1982, he reiterated by stating that "Kashmir has been a disputed issue, but so far as the Northern Areas are concerned, we do not accept them disputed" he also nominated three individuals of the area, for the Majlis-e-Shura, as observers. Speaking at the Shura, he further stated in reference to the Northern Areas that "I am not talking of Kashmir; I am talking about the Northern Areas, which make part of Pakistan." Zia's statement de facto deprived the people of the region the right to participate in the eventual plebiscite to be held across the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir.

High Power Committee to settle the future of the Northern Areas (1984-85): A High Power Committee was constituted in 1984-85 to settle the future of the Northern Areas. Members of the Committee included the Secretaries of Divisions/ Ministries of Establishment, Finance, Planning, Law, Interior, Education, and Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas. The report of the Committee was neither implemented, nor made public.

Appointment of Advisor to Minister for Kashmir Affairs (1985): A high power Committee was constituted by the

government including Federal Secretaries of Finance, Planning, Law, Interior, Education, and Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas (KA&NA) for introducing the reforms in Gilgit Baltistan. On recommendations of the Committee a representative from Northern Areas, Aga Ahmad Ali Shah was appointed as Advisor to Minister Kashmir Affairs.

Appointment of Advisor to Prime Minister (1988): The democratic government of Ms. Benazir Bhutto appointed an elected representative of Northern Areas Council Mr.Qurban Ali as Advisor to Prime Minister with equal status of a State Minister.

Benazir Bhutto Introduced Reforms (1994): The Federal Cabinet in 1994 approved a "Reforms Package" for the Northern areas, which were now turned into a 'de facto' province. The Northern Areas Rules of Business were framed.

Major administrative provisions of the 'package' were:

- To administer Northern Areas, the Federal Minister of Kashmir Affairs, will be the Chief Executive of the Council; To assist the C.E; the Council will elect a Deputy Chief Executive;
- Three to five members of the Council will be taken as Advisors to C.E. They will enjoy the status of provincial ministers. Their appointment will, however, depend on the C.E's discretion.
- The post of Judicial Commissioner will be abolished, and a 3- member Chief Court will be constituted under the chairmanship of a retired Judge. Any senior judicial officer belonging to federation or the provincial High Court will be deputed as member of the Chief Court, whereas a District Session Judge from the Northern Areas will also be its member. The Court was however, not authorized to hear writ petitions.

 For the first time, the federal government appointed in the area, a Chief Secretary and four Secretaries. The positions of Chief Secretary and Civil Secretariats were established and judicial reforms were introduced.

A positive outcome from the package had been that partybased elections were held for the first time in 1994. A member of Pakistan People's Party got elected as Deputy Chief Executive. PPP and Tahrik-i-Jafaria also sent two Advisors each, while Muslim League (Junejo group) got one seat of Advisor.

These Advisors were assigned public departments.

Rules of Business were also framed so that official matters could be regulated.

The negatives of the package were mainly that:

- All the five Advisors including the Deputy CE, generally complained that they had no powers. Authority instead was still exercised by the bureaucracy.
- A non- representative person (C.E.) was made head of the popularly elected Deputy Chief Executive. That adversely affected the credibility of the elected body, and gave the impression that it was only a showpiece.
- Financial and administrative powers remained centred in the federal Finance and Establishment Divisions, which the Chief Executive exercised as his exclusive prerogative. Thus the lack of power of the Deputy Chief Executive and the Advisors became evident.

Enhancement of NAC Members: On April 25, 1994, the membership of the Northern Areas Council was enhanced from 18 to 26. It was also decided that members will be elected on the basis of adult franchise.

Decision of the Supreme Court of Pakistan (1999): In a

petition brought before the Supreme Court of Pakistan by Habib Wahab al-Khairi (founder of Al-Jihad Trust, Rawalpindi) for which the Secretary, Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas was made Defendant, a plea was made before the Court to restore the basic human rights of the people of the area on grounds that though the constitutional position of the Northern Areas is that they are part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, there is persistent confusion in the administrative and judicial structure that gave rise to various problems and the people of the area that needed to be redressed.

The significant portions of the directions of the Supreme Court of Pakistan are as excerpted below:

"... since the geographical location of the Northern Areas is very sensitive because it is bordering India, China, Tibet and (erstwhile) USSR, and as the above areas in the past have also been treated differently... this Court cannot decide what type of Government should be provided to ensure the compliance with the above mandate of the Constitution. Nor we can direct that the people of Northern Areas should be given representation in the Parliament as, at this stage it may not be in the larger interest of the country because of the fact that a plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations is to be held. The above questions are to be decided by the Parliament and the Executive. This Court at the most can direct that the proper administrative and legislative steps should be taken to ensure that the people of Northern Areas enjoy their above rights under the Constitution."

"...As regards the right to access to justice through an independent judiciary, it may be observed that the Northern Areas has a Chief Court, which can be equated with a High Court provided it is manned by the persons or the statute who are fit to be elevated as Judges to any High Court in Pakistan.

Its jurisdiction is to be enlarged as to include jurisdiction to entertain Constitutional Petitions inter alia to enforce the Fundamental Rights enshrined in the Constitution..."

"...To initiate appropriate administrative/legislative measures within a period of six months from today to make necessary amendments in the Constitution/relevant statute/statues /order/ orders / rules/notification / notifications, to ensure that the people of Northern Areas enjoy their above fundamental rights, namely, to be governed through their chosen representatives and to have access to justice through an independent judiciary inter alia for enforcement of their Fundamental Rights guaranteed under the Constitution.8

Response of the Government of Pakistan to the Supreme Court Directions (October 1999):

In response to the Pakistan Supreme Court's decision, a special package deal for the Northern Areas. The then Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas Lt Gen (Retd) Abdul Majeed Malik made a detailed visit to the area and on October 2, 1999, announced that government was soon bringing a constitutional reforms package which would elevate the Northern Areas Council into Northern Areas Legislative Council. The Federal government also announced the holding of elections for the Council and local bodies. (However, even as the modalities for these were under discussion, the Army took over power on October 12, 1999. The new government nevertheless decided to hold the elections as scheduled and these were held under the supervision of the military). An amendment in the "Legal Frame Work Order 1994" was subsequently also made on 07 July, 2000.

The main features of the Reforms Package were:

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⁸Supreme Court Monthly Review, vol. XXXII, May 28, 1999, "The Decision of Supreme Court of Pakistan".

- Northern Area Council was renamed "Northern Area Legislative Council", and was authorized legislation in 40 items;
- Council's membership was raised to 29. Five seats were reserved for women - one elected indirectly, from each district;
- "Chief Executive" will not be from amongst the Council members;
- The Speaker to be elected by the majority of the Council members, will preside over council's meetings;
- The Council members to be empowered to approve development schemes;
- The Deputy Chief Executive to be authorized to transfer officers of various grades but not the Deputy Commissioner or the Superintendent of Police. For that he will have to get prior approval of the Chief Secretary

Though it was expected that the "package" would lead to the setting up of local government with powers being devolved, the real transfer of power and decision-making still does not rest with the elected representatives. Power continued to vest with the bureaucracy and it became obvious that unless the Deputy Chief Executive is not enabled to exercise full financial and administrative powers, he will not be able to show any meaningful performance in public service.

Establishment of Apex Court (2005): Northern Areas Court of appeals was established. (In a separate order, the reserved seats in the NALC were increased to six reserved seats for technocrats and one additional seat for women).

NALC Name Changed (2007): The Northern Areas Legal Framework Order 1994 was renamed as Northern Areas Governance Order 1994 and amended. The NALC was renamed as Northern Areas Legislative Assembly.

THE GILGIT BALTISTAN REFORMS PACKAGE 2007

On August 23, 2007, President Musharraf visited Gilgit and declared the promulgation of an amended version of the existing Legal Framework Order (LFO) to fulfil a longstanding demand of the local people.

As per the new amendments, the powers of the federal Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas have been curtailed and vested in the elected government. The Deputy Chief Executive stood promoted to the position of Chief Executive, while the Minister of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas who is appointed by the federal government, will now perform as the Chairman of the NA government.

GILGIT BALTISTAN EMPOWERMENT AND SELF-GOVERNANCE ORDER, 2009

On August 29, 2009, the Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order 2009, was passed by the Pakistan Cabinet and later signed and promulgated as law by the President of Pakistan. The major provisions of the Order are:

- (a) Grant of self-rule to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, by creating, an elected Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly and Gilgit Baltistan Council. Gilgit Baltistan thus gained de facto province-like status without constitutionally becoming part of Pakistan.
- (b) Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly to be a 33-seat unicameral legislative body. Of the 33 seats, 24 are filled by direct elections. In addition, the reserves 3 seats for technocrats and 6 seats for women.
- (c) A Speaker and a Deputy Speaker to be elected by the Assembly from amongst its members,. After the election of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, the Assembly cannot transact any other business unless it elects the Chief Minister.

- (d) The Chief Minister is elected in a special session, summoned by the Governor on a day specified by the President. The Chief Minister obtains vote of confidence from the Assembly within 60 days of assuming office.
- (e) The Legislative Assembly has powers to make laws on selected 61 subjects.
- (f) A Gilgit Baltistan Consolidated Fund set up and the annual budget to be presented to the Assembly and voted upon as per practice in other Provinces (of Pakistan).

POLITICAL GROUPS

<u>Jama'at-e-Islami</u>: Though the Jama'at does not appeal on the sectarian basis, it attracts a number of religious-minded people. It is active both in PoK and in Gilgit Baltistan. It promotes a belief that Kashmir would soon be free and if therefore, the two areas are merged in one unit it will strengthen the freedom movement, making it more difficult for India.

<u>Pakistan People's Party</u>: Pakistan People's Party is a considerable force in Gilgit Baltistan politics and has had good representation in the Northern Area Council. However in the 2015 Gilgit Baltistan assembly elections, it was voted out of power and won only one seat. Its principle stand is that government can restore rights of the people without damaging the cause of Kashmir

Pakistan Muslim League (N): Pakistan Muslim League has also been prominent in the electoral politics of Gilgit Baltistan. The party's stance is that the Northern Areas be given a government on the pattern of PoK with the Azad Kashmir. The Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) has secured 14 seats out of 23 in the 2015 Gilgit Baltistan Assembly elections.

The Gilgit League: In 1957, Colonel Mirza Hasan Khan, well regarded locally as a military hero, established the first local

level political organisation, named the 'Gilgit League'. After the imposition of Martial Law in Pakistan in 1958, though the law itself was not applied to the Northern Areas, The Gilgit League was banned and its founder, Col Mirza Hasan Khan himself joined the 'Azad Kashmir' Civil Service in 1961. He subsequently joined the Pakistan People's Party but was arrested by ZA Bhutto regime on political differences in 1973 and jailed.

Gilgit Baltistan Jamhoori Mahaz: During 1967-71, a group of youth led by Amir Hamza, a resident of Gilgit and a former SSP of Ghizer district formed a political set-up named Gilgit Baltistan Jamhoori Mahaz (Gilgit Baltistan Democratic Forum) which had a one point demand for peoples' representation either in the Pakistan National Assembly or the region being given a status such as granted to the 'Azad' J&K Assembly. Hamza had even been jailed in his youth for raising this demand. The Mahaz resorted to various means such as the media, literature and demonstrations to espouse their cause which effort resulted in the 'Azad' J&K Assembly adopting a resolution seeking the Northern Areas joining of AJ&K. The Mahaz however became inactive after 1973.

Incident: In 1971, a body named the Tanzeem-e-Millat was formed with an agenda for abolition of the Princely States and award of Provincial status to the Northern Areas. Its founders and leaders included Johar Ali, the first Advocate to hail from the Northern Areas. An incident occurred during this period brought a number of changes in the administrative set-up in NAs. A delegation of the TEM went to see the Resident Commissioner to get redressed the injustice done to the Head mistress. The Commissioner insulted the delegation. To react, the organization took to the streets with protest rallies and meetings. The administration imprisoned fifteen top leaders of the TEM, but people broke the jail and set their leaders free. In response, the protestors attacked Gilgit Jail and set free their arrested leaders but the leaders were re-arrested

and placed in other jails such as Haripur jail in NWFP. During 1972 the Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto government announced a general amnesty with reference to the above incident as also a package of reforms that included replacement of the FCR besides the setting up of a new District of Diamir. The TEM dissipated after these administrative reforms and was merged in the Pakistan People's Party.

Gilgit and Baltistan Students Federation: A "Gilgit and Baltistan Students Federation" was set up by students of the Northern Areas who were studying in Karachi. While the set up could not generate any political traction, they did however play a role in creating awareness on the issues affecting the region. The Federation lost steam and became dysfunctional after 1976.

Response of Political Parties to Zia's Statements of April 1982: In response to President Zia's statements of Arril and May 1982 regarding the position of the region, four major political parties (Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Azad Kashmir People's Party, Jammu and Kashmir Mahaze-Raiy Shumari, and Azad Muslim Conference) joined in a movement for the restoration of democracy. Leaders of all the four parties sent a jointly signed letter to President Zia on May 4, 1982. The letter explained in sufficient detail the position of the areas: that they belonged to the state, and like the rest of the state constituents, their future position was yet to be decided

Balawaristan National Front: The BNF, so named after a historic name for the region, was formed in 1989 under the Chairmanship of Nawaz Khan Naji and reorganised in 1993. The BNF does not consider areas of Gilgit and Baltistan nor the neighboring regions of Ladakh, or Kargil to be legally or constitutionally part of Pakistan or India. Claiming that both India and Pakistan do not want to let loose their respective hold over Kashmir and Northern Areas, the BNF suggests a "practical" solution, as they call it, for the world community.

Accordingly, PoK, Northern Areas, Srinagar, Jammu, and Ladakh are to be declared five separate and independent states and then brought into a "federation". Plebiscite then be carried under the auspices of the United Nations in all these states to ascertain whether they would; (i) maintain the federation; (ii) join Pakistan; or (iii) join India. The majority vote of each state is to decide its fate.

The party fielded two candidates in the 2009 elections for the legislative assembly of Gilgit Baltistan - though neither candidate was elected to the 33-seat assembly, but in a special by-election in 2011, BNF founder Nawaz Khan Naji won seat LA-22 Ghanche-I, with 46.4% of ballots cast in his favor. Upon taking his seat in the assembly, he undertook an oath to "remain faithful to the state of Pakistan". Its plea is that the Gilgit and Baltistan regions had been predominantly Shia in 1947 but the ethnic composition has been deliberately sought to be altered by promoting Sunnis from other areas of Pakistan to migrate to the area.

<u>Gilgit Baltistan United Movement</u>: A political movement based in Skardu, the Movement demands a fully autonomy to Gilgit and Baltistan. Its stanced is that the regions should be denoted "Gilgit Baltistan" and be given the status of an "Independent Constitutional Assembly".

<u>Gilgit Baltistan Democratic Alliance</u>: A leading political conglomerate of eight nationalist parties in Gilgit Baltistan. It advocates political autonomy and the resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

The KNM has been KNM is struggling for the freedom of Karakorum from last 22 years and its cadres face harassment through fake cases in various Courts.

Bolor⁹ **Thinkers' Forum**: A small group of intellectuals who, in a public seminar in Rawalpindi in 2005, called for "an independent Bolor state," and asserted that "it was their legitimate right to demand an independent Bolor state".

Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front: The organization is one of those who exist in all parts of Jammu and Kashmir. It considers that Jammu and Kashmir is an indivisible entity. The permanent mebbers of the UNSC should form a Kashmir Committee under the supervision of UN Secretary General which Committee should declare Kashmir free and independent for 15 years. Plebiscite be held after that period, and the majority decision of the people be acceptable.

Northern Areas Bar Council: Though not a political party it plays an important role in the struggle for basic rights of the people and their constitutional position of Gilgit Baltistan. Its stance is for Gilgit Baltistan being declared fifth province (of Pakistan).

All Parties Mutahidda Council: The Mutahidda Council of 12 political and religious parties wants Gilgit Baltistan being given a provisional constitution like PoK with who Gilgit Baltistan should have a common Senate with one President.

'AJ&K' Leadership: All political parties, including the ruling groups in AJ&K, maintain a unanimous position about Northern Areas. In the context of the future of Northern Areas, frequently held All Parties Conferences expressed consensus position that: "Northern Areas are part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and may be merged in 'Azad' Kashmir (PoK)."

⁹Bolor-Tagh is an old name for the longitudinal range in eastern Pamir Mountains (ancient Mount Imeon) extending from Kunlun Mountains in the south to the east extremity of the Trans-Alay Range in the north. Highest peaks Kongur Tagh (7649 m) and Muztagh Ata. Bolor-Tagh lies entirely in the Xinjiang province of western China. Marco Polo visited the area in 1271 during his travel to China, describing it under the name of 'Bolor'.

SECTARIAN GROUPS

Shia Groups

There are two principal Shia Groups in the Gilgit Baltistan Province:

- (a) Anjuman Ahle-Tashia was established before the Partition (1947) and is registered under Societies Act. Its major activity is establishment and running of Madarsas and Masjids. Since 1980 it also started working for securing Shia political rights. It is quite effective in its community.
- (b) <u>Tahrik-e-Ja'fria Pakistan</u>: Tahrik is a sister organization of the Anjuman Ahle-Tashia and is regarded as its political front. In the 1994 administrative setup, two Advisors were taken from the Tahrik. A Deputy Chief Executive elected on July 28, 2000, also belonged to the group.

Both these organizations demand to make Northern Areas, the fifth province of Pakistan. They claim that historically the areas never belonged to Kashmir, nor they have anything common in culture. They also argue that it was the people of the Northern Areas who themselves overthrew Dogra Raj and got the areas annexed with Pakistan accepted the Pakistan. annexation. but conditions at that time warranted not to announce it; mainly because the Foreign Office considered that as and when plebiscite is held people of the area will cast their vote in favour of Pakistan. The two organizations have also expressed apprehension many a time that if made part of Kashmir. Northern Areas will remain backward and disadvantaged, because being less developed they would never be in a position to compete with more developed Kashmiris.

The Sunni Group (Tanzeem-e-Ahle-Sunnah wal Jamaat) Established as a social welfare organization in 1980 represents the Sunni sect. Its original purpose was the establishment and administration of masjids and Madarsas. However, when sectarian clashes started in 1980, Tanzeem became the political and religious party of the Sunnis, and was practically accepted in that position as representative of Sunnis. The organization supports the option that together with 'Azad Kashmir' (POK), the Northern Areas should form one unit. Tanzeem views that by bringing the two areas together, Sunnis will command majority, and otherwise they will remain minority in the Northern Areas.

MAJOR INCIDENTS OF SECTARIAN DISCORD

Beginnings of Discord (1971): The first reported sectarian clash in Gilgit Baltistan occurred when Sunnis objected to Shias making a stage in the middle of a road and delivering speeches. The Government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto had then sided with the Sunnis and stopped the practice. The Shias took to the streets and in the resultant violence, several Shias were injured in police firing.

The Girls' School Incident (1971): An incident occurred during this period brought a number of changes in the administrative set-up in NAs. A delegation of the TEM went to see the Resident Commissioner to get redressed the injustice done to the Head mistress. The Commissioner insulted the delegation. To react, the organization took to the streets with protest rallies and meetings. In response, the administration resorted to firing killing a few demonstrators. This incident turned into a political movement demanding basic rights for the Northern Areas. Because of mishandling by the administration, the element of violence entered into an otherwise peaceful protest movement. The administration got hold of and imprisoned fifteen top leaders of the TEM, but people broke the jail and set their leaders free. In response, the protestors attacked Gilgit Jail and set free their arrested

leaders but the leaders were re-arrested and placed in other jails such as Haripur jail in NWFP. During 1972 the Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto government announced a general amnesty with reference to the above incident as also a package of reforms that included replacement of the FCR besides the setting up of a new District of Diamer.

Assassination of Local Leaders (1992 & 1993): The assassination of one Gayyasuddin, a Sunni leader, on 30 May 1992 sparked a series of riots between the two communities in which several people were killed. Peace was restored through consensus but the killing of a Shia leader named Latif Hassan on 4 August 1993 caused a breakdown of the fragile peace and resulted in the death of at least 20 more lives.

Shia Riots (1988): Major anti-Shia riots in Gilgit broke out in May 1988 over the sighting of the moon at the conclusion of the holy month of Ramadan. While the Shias in Gilgit were celebrating Eid al-Fitr, they were attacked by a group of extremist Sunnis who were still fasting because their religious leaders had not announced the sighting of the moon. This resulted in violent clashes between Sunnis and Shias. After a brief calm, the Military regime under Zia ul Haq allegedly backed some Sunni Militants to 'teach a lesson' to the Shias, which resulted in a large number of Shias being killed, the unofficial reports placing the number killed at 700. An assessment of the violence carried by The Herald, the monthly journal of the prestigious Dawn group of Karachi in its April 1990 is self-speaking:

In May 1988, low-intensity political rivalry and sectarian tension ignited into full-scale carnage as thousands of armed tribesmen from outside Gilgit district invaded Gilgit along the Karakoram Highway. Nobody stopped them. They destroyed crops and houses, lynched and burnt people to death in the villages around Gilgit town. The number of dead and injured was in the hundreds. But numbers alone tell nothing of the savagery of the

invading hordes and the chilling impact it has left on these peaceful valleys.

The Text Book Issue (2004): On 03 June 2004 violence broke out in Gilgit City in which one person was killed and several hurt. Over the following days, protests continued and the unrest also spread to Baltistan. The cause of the violent outbreak was that text books published by the Punjab Textbook Board prescribed as teaching material for the Northern Areas for Islamiyat Studies depicted Islamic practices in a strictly Sunnite way and contrary to the faith of the Shias of the area. There were a total of sixteen such textbooks in which only sayings of the Prophet (hadith) accepted by the Sunna were mentioned and Shi'ite personalities were left aside or not referred to in due form. This conflict had in fact been simmering since 2000 and many had predicted the explosion of a 'sectarian time bomb'.

Series of Sectarian Violence(2005)

Assassination of Syed Agha Ziauddin Rizvi (Jan 2005): In January 2005, Rizvi a prominent Shia leader who was shot at and died after almost a week, sparked another round of violence. One of the assailants who was killed by Syed Rizvi's bodyguards was identified as belonging to the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. The Shia reaction to the death of their leader led to some Government Offices and public properties being attacked. A Sunni District Forest Officer and a Director of the Health Department was also killed.

Killing of Police Officer (March 2005): A Sunni Inspector General of Police, Sakhiullah Tareen, who was in charge of the region at the time of Rizvi's assassination, was shot dead along with four Police officials near village Jotal, 30 kilometers from Gilgit on 23 March 2005 in what is regarded as a retaliation to the Shia leader Rizvi's assassination.

Attack on Bus (July 2005): Four passengers were killed and six injured in an attack on a bus in the Gonar farms area of Chilas on July 17, 2005. The incident was followed with retaliatory attacks with several deaths occurring in the revenge attacks. The extent of mistrust was such that people are reluctant to travel on the roads running through the areas inhabited by the rival sect.

Sectarian Violence at Hunza (2005): The population is traditionally predominantly Shia (Jafria). Following sectarian violence in January 2005, the Tanzim Ahle Sunnah wal Jama'at representing Sunnis, and the Central Anjuman-e-Imamia Northern Areas representing Shias (Jafria), signed a six-point peace agreement arranged by the Northern Areas Legislative Council (NALC) on 18 February 2005, to ensure peace in the area.

Hunza Violence (2011): On August 11, 2011, 25 out of the 457 families whose land had been destroyed by the formation of Attabad Lake took to the streets and demanded compensation. The Police action to clear Karakoram Highway for Chief Minister Mehdi Shah, who was visiting the valley, to pass through was use of tear gas followed by live ammunition. In this action, two protesters—Afzal Baig and his father Sherullah Baig were shot dead and riots erupted in Hunza Valley. Protesters torched government offices and looted a police station in Aliabad. Over a hundred suspects were arrested. Though a Judicial Commission into the police action had been instituted, the Report has not been made public. In a Judgment delivered in September 2016, the ATC judge exonerated five of the 17 people booked in the case and held 12 accused guilty of vandalising property, attacking public servants, ransacking arms and ammunitions from the police station. The ATC judge also imposed a fine of Rs100,000 on each convict.

The Kohistan Killings (2012)¹⁰: On 28 February 2012, an incuident occurred on the Karakoram highway in which at least 18 innocent pilgrims belonging to Gilgit Baltistan were killed by unknown assailants. Those killed were part of a group returning from a pilgrimage to holy shrines in Iran and were travelling in a convoy of four buses from Rawalpindi to Gilgit. The attack took place in Harban Nullah in Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The victims were forced to disembark from the buses after having been identified as Shia, all men, including three of the bus drivers. The injured, however, included men, women and children. Ahmed Marwat, commander of an outlawed terrorist group, Jundullah, owned up responsibility for the attack, stating clearly that these people were targeted because they belonged to the Shia community. Jundullah, which allegedly has links to the Taliban and the al Qaeda, is based in Balochistan. This group is said to be different from the Jundallah active in neighbouring Iran. The killers, dressed in military uniforms, managed to escape the scene of attack without much difficulty.

The Massacre at Chilas (2012)¹¹: Even before Gilgit Baltistan could recover from the shock of the Kohistan killings, at least 15 to 20 people were killed and almost 50 injured in yet another incident in Chilas, Gilgit on 03 April 2012. This incident occurred in the wake of a procession led by Ahl-e-Sunnat-Wal-Jamaat (ASWJ, is known to be the front of the banned terrorist outfit Sipah-e-Sahaba) protesting against the arrest of some its leaders in connection with the Kohistan incident. In Gilgit, protesters burnt tyres on the roads to create a sense of fear and forced shops to close. Grenades were lobbed at this procession by unidentified men riding on motor cycles.

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¹⁰Extracted from IDSA ISSUE BRIEF Sectarian Strife in Gilgit Baltistan by Priyanka Singh published on May 21, 2012 @ http://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/SectarianStrifeinGilgitBaltistan_psingh_210512

¹¹Extracted from IDSA ISSUE BRIEF Sectarian Strife in Gilgit Baltistan by Priyanka Singh published on May 21, 2012 @ http://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/SectarianStrifeinGilgitBaltistan psingh 210512

Simultaneously, armed men killed Shia passengers after forcing them to get down from the bus they were travelling in Chilas. The fallout was immediate: Sunni mosques made public pronouncements against the Shia community and similarly Shias in Baltistan mobilised to avenge the killings. Some people, noted to be Sunnis, were taken hostage by a mob in order to pressurise the authorities to take steps to control the situation. The hostages included a civil judge and a district health officer. The weeklong hostage crisis came to an end when 31 Sunni hostages were released.

CAUSATIVEFACTORSFORSECTARIAN CONFLICTAND TENSION

'Nizam-e-Mustafa' (1980s): General Zia-ul-Haq who assumed power as the Martial law Administrator through the 1980s. imposed Sharia with a distinct pro-Sunni bent and interpretation. Several Sunni Islamic parties and Deobandi Groups had come up during his rule which caused disaffection amongst the majority Shia community in Gilgit Baltistan. Region. This resulted in sectarian clashes erupting to the politics played by the regional administrative officers appointed by the Federal Government.

Tilting the Demographic Balance: There has been a perceptible policy, since the Zia era, of altering the demographic balance of Shia-dominated Gilgit Baltistan by settling outsiders in the area. It is reported that, as of January 2001, the old population ratio of 1:4 (non-locals to locals) has now changed to 3:4 (non-locals to locals). The Shia pockets of Skardu and Gilgit are witnessing a constant increase in the population of non-Shias. In the Gilgit and Skardu areas, large tracts of land have been allotted to non-locals. Other outsiders have purchased substantial stretches of land since they are economically better off than the locals. The rapid induction of Punjabi and Pushtun outsiders has created a sense of acute insecurity among the locals.

<u>Unemployed Mujahideens</u>: Several local Sunnis, who had fought against the erstwhile Soviet Union as mujahideen (holy warriors) in Afghanistan, returned home after the Soviet withdrawal in the late 1980s, and joined the anti-Shia sectarian groups. In most of the Sunni-dominated areas, there was an increase in the growth of training camps where Sunni militants were given training along with arms and ammunition. The easy availability of arms in the area, including AK-47 assault rifles and rocket launchers, is another reason for the violence.

The Karakoram Highway: Has become a major battleground in the sectarian strife with 'sitting duck' targets. This all-weather road, stretching about 840 kilometers, runs through a predominantly Sunni area from Gilgit to Rawalpindi, where instances of firing on passenger buses have occurred several times, claiming many lives. It also passes via the Shia dominated Nagar Valley onwards to Hunza, where incidents of selective killings and ambushing of buses are not uncommon. Traveling on this road is considered a nightmare for both communities.

Situation in 2016

Importantly, as per a very recently published summation of violence in Pakistan including the illegally held regions of Gilgit and Baltistan during 2016, these regions have seen the least fatalities.

Fatalities	from	violence	by	province	in	2016
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Region	Fatalities	Injuries	Casualties 1447 805	
Balochistan	805	642		
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	357	448		
Sindh	520	186	706	
Punjab	424	280	704	
Federally Administered Tribal areas	496	146	642	
Azad Jammu & Kashmir	1	10	11	
Gilgit-Baltistan	5	0	5	
Islamabad	2	2	4	
Total	2,610	1,714	4,324	

Figure 8 - Source: The DAWN, 04 January 2017

INDIA'S POSITION ON GILGIT BALTISTAN12

India's case on Gilgit Baltistan rests on the accession of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir to India in 1947. From 1852, the British had maintained a Resident in Srinagar and a Political Agent in Gilgit Wazarat, a tract of semi-autonomous states like Nagar and Hunza, north of the Kishenganga, to keep a watch on the Russian empire.

In March 1935, after the Soviets established control of Central Asia, the British took the territory on a 60-year lease from the Maharaja and it was administered by a British officer and policed by the Gilgit Scouts.

On August 1, 1947 the British terminated the lease and handed the territory back to the Maharaja. On October 31, two officers of the Gilgit Scouts, Major William Brown and Capt S. A. Mathieson, along with Subedar Major Babar Khan, a relative of the Mir of Hunza, led a revolt of the state forces and the Gilgit Scouts, arrested the new governor Ghansara Singh and hoisted the Pakistani flag at the residency.

Though Pakistan later claimed that the Rajas of Nagar and Hunza had acceded to it, but the only record of Gilgit's accession seems to have been a wireless message requesting that they send a political agent to take charge from the republic that had been set up in the wake of the coup. In any case, none of this was legally tenable since they were part of J&K, and the only authority who could legally accede to anyone was Maharaja Hari Singh, who signed the Instrument of Accession to India.

Non-Muslim soldiers, many of them Sikhs or Gurkhas were killed or captured and the Muslim rebels constituted irregular forces, later supplemented by Pakistani regulars who attacked

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¹²Extracted from 'Why India needs to think through its policy on Gilgit-Baltistan and POK' by Manoj Joshi, Observer Research Foundation, 26 August 2016 @ http://www.orfonline.org/research/why-india-needs-to-think-through-its-policy-on-gilgit-baltistan-and-pok/

Skardu, Dras, Kargil and Leh. Skardu held out heroically for eight months before surrendering, the Indian Army managed to clear the Pakistani forces from Dras, Kargil and Leh before the ceasefire came into force on December 31, 1948.

Pakistan also claimed legal rights through the so-called 1949 Karachi Agreement signed with Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas, the supreme leader of "Azad Kashmir".

No copy of this agreement can be found in the Pakistan government records. The "Azad Kashmir" government never had any control over the region, and so handing it to Pakistan was a sleight of hand to disguise outright annexation of territory that legally belongs even now to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, whose capitals are Srinagar and Jammu.

The extent of official British complicity is not clear. Brown apparently received a high British award in 1948. But, as brought out by C. Dasgupta in his 2002 book, War and Diplomacy in Kashmir, it is also visible in the coordination of the British High Commissioners in Karachi and New Delhi who got the British commanders of both forces to ensure that the Indian Air Force did not interdict Pakistani air supply missions to their forces in Gilgit.

RECENT INDIAN GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS

Rajya Sabha Question No 44 (by Shri Prakash Javadekar) Answered on 15 March 2012.

Question:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the media reports that Pakistan is considering handing over Gilgit Baltistan area of Jammu and Kashmir, presently in the PoK, to China on lease of fifty years;
- (b) in the perception of Government, in what manner the proposed lease alters the security and geo-political perception to India:

- (c) the number of rivers flowing into India through or from the Gilgit Baltistan area of Jammu and Kashmir; and
- (d) Government's response to it in the light of the status of the entire Jammu and Kashmir, including Gilgit Baltistan area being Indian Territory?

Answer (by Minister of External Affairs Shri SM Krishna)

(a) & (b) Government has seen media reports that Pakistan is considering a proposal to lease Gilgit Baltistan region in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) to China for fifty years. Government has not seen any official statement or report by the Government of Pakistan in this regard.

However, under the so called China-Pakistan "Boundary Agreement" of 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 Sq. Kms. of Indian territory in POK to China. Government remains firm in its resolve to take all necessary steps to effectively safeguard India's security and territorial integrity.

- (c) No major river is flowing into India through or from the Gilgit Baltistan area of Jammu and Kashmir.
- (d) Government's principled and consistent position is that the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and Pakistan has been in illegal occupation of parts of the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. Government keeps a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.

Official Spokesperson's response to media question on elections in Gilgit Baltistan (08 Jun 2015)¹³

"India's position is well known. The entire State of Jammu &

¹³Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs website @ http://www.mea.gov.in/media-briefings.htm?dtl/25307/Official_Spokespersons_response_to_a_media_question_on_elections_which_are_to_be_held_in_Gilgit-Baltistan_on_June_8_2015

Kashmir which includes the regions of Gilgit and Baltistan is an integral part of India.

The election in Gilgit and Baltistan on June 8 under the so called "Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self Government Order" is an attempt by Pakistan to camouflage its forcible and illegal occupation of the regions. We are concerned at the continued efforts by Pakistan to deny the people of the region their political rights, and the efforts being made to absorb these territories. The fact that a Federal Minister of Pakistan is also the "Governor of Gilgit Baltistan" speaks for itself.

Unfortunately in recent times the people of the region have also become victims of sectarian conflict, terrorism and extreme economic hardship due to Pakistan's occupationary policies."

J&K Governor's Address to the J&K Assembly (02 Jan 2017)

On Cross-LoC CBMs: "A list of 21 more tradeable items has been submitted to the Government of India for taking up this matter with the Government of Pakistan," and "The state government is discussing with the Union Home Ministry the opening of four new routes this year which include: Jammu-Sialkot; Chhamb Jourian — Mirpur; Gurez-Astoor-Gilgit; and Jhanger (Nowshera)-Mirpur. The opening of three other routes viz Kargil-Skardu, Turtuk-Khapulu, and Titwal-Chilhan (across the Neelam Valley) are also being explored".

India's Position on the CPEC at the Belt and Road Forum at Beijing (14-15 May 2017)

While declining the invitation by Chia to attend the BRI Forum in May 2017, the MEA issued a statement that "...No country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity" and that "the connectivity initiative must be pursued in a manner that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity".

The statement added that "Guided by our principled position in the matter, we have been urging China to engage in a meaningful dialogue on its connectivity initiative, 'One Belt, One Road' which was later renamed as 'Belt and Road Initiative'. We are awaiting a positive response from the Chinese side,"

The statement stressed that "India has been urging China to engage in a meaningful dialogue on OBOR. Awaiting a positive response from China."

THE TRANS KARAKORAM TRACT (SHAKSGAM)

The Trans-Karakoram tract, also known as Shaksgam or the Shaksgam tract, an area of more than 9,900 km along both sides of the Shaksgam River, extends from the Karakoram to the Kunlun range.

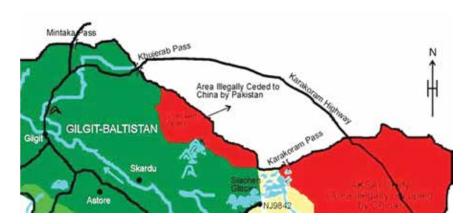
The Shaksgam Tract is amongst the most inhospitable areas of the world, with some of the highest mountains. It is bounden in the North by the Kun Lun Mountains and by the Karakoram peaks to its south and on its Southeast is adjacent to the Siachen Glacier.

An area that is legally part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir has since 1963 been administered by China as a part of Kargilik County and Taxkorgan Tajik Autonomous County in the Kashgar Prefecture of Xinjiang Autonomous Region. Prior to 1963 The Shaksgam tract had been administered as a part of Shigar.

The geographical entities in both the Aghil and Shaksgam valleys largely possess Balti nomenclature demonstrating an ancient socio-economic and political interlinks of these valleys with Baltistan. The passes are called Sarpo Lago (yellow top of the pass), Drenmang La (abundant with bears), Shingshol La (pass where tree density is thinning) and Sagang La (pass with earth and ice) while the mountains are named Skyang Kangri (wild donkey), Kyagar Kangri (grey and white) and

Skamri (dry rock), and the valleys are Shaksgam (dried up heap of pebbles), Aghil Ldepsang (plain), Marpo Lungpa (red), Salungma (earthen), Khapulung (gateway valley), Kharkhor Lungma (castle surrounding) and Skam Lungpa (dry). The famous camping grounds include Moni Brangsa (residence of musicians), Balti Brangsa (Balti residence) and Balti Pulo (dwellings of the Baltis).

According to the local historians, the Raja of Shigar established a polo-ground south of the Shaksgam valley in the 5th Century AD. The ground, called Muztaghi Shagaran, the polo-ground of ice-peak, attracted fanfare with players and musicians when the autumn harvest festival was celebrated.



Hunza and China

Hunza was an independent principality for centuries. It was ruled by the Mirs of Hunza, who took the title of Thum.

The Hunzas were tributaries and allies to China, acknowledging China as suzerain since 1761. China granted Hunza a jagir (Land grant) in Yarkand and paid the Mir of Hunza a subsidy for assistance given by the Mir in suppressing a rebellion in Yarkand.

In the late 19th century Hunza became embroiled in the Great Game, the rivalry between Britain and Russia for control

of the northern approaches to India. The British suspected Russian involvement "with the Rulers of the petty States on the northern boundary of Kashmir". In 1888 a Russian Captain, one Bronislav Grombchevsky visited Hunza,

British Advent into Shaksgam

The following year the British Captain Francis Younghusband visited Hunza. The purpose of his visit is best gleaned from the writings of his own pen:

" I have referred to a tribe of raiders who inhabit the little State of Hunza (or Kanjut, as it is always called on the Yarkand side), which is situated to the north of Kashmir. Deep set among the mountains, accessible only by lofty snowy passes or through narrow impracticable defiles, the little state had bred and harboured a race of men who, issuing from the mountain fastnesses had raised incessantly upon the countries around. The traders on the road from Yarkand to India continually suffered from these wild freebooters; the peace loving inhabitants of the Yarkand valleys were ever subject to their attacks, and compelled to hand them over blackmail; the nomadic Kirghiz, scattered defenceless in their tents over the open valleys of the Pamirs, had to pay their tribute or suffer the consequences of refusal; the Kashmir troops at Gilgit dreaded their attacks; and even the poor Baltis in distant and inaccessible Askoli shuddered at the thought of them. No one could get at these wild Hunza raiders, secure as they were in their impenetrable valleys, but they could strike at everyone around them.

In the autumn of 1888 - the year after I had crossed the Muztagh pass, these robbers had made an unusually daring attack upon a large caravan, and had carried off a number of Kirghiz from Shahidulla, on the Yarkand road. The Kirgiz had applied to the Chinese to the protection against such raids but had been refused it, and they thereupon, in the spring of 1889, made a similar petition to the British Authorities. It was to inquire into and report upon the circumstances of this raid, and to examine all the country between the trade route and Hunza, with view to stopping such raids for the future that I was now sent by the Government of India'.14

Younghusband acted as a diplomat and spy on the frontiers of this conflicted area, and in 1889 was politely, almost charmingly, arrested by his Russian counterpart, who informed him that the area they were in was now Russian. The following excerpt from the Royal Scottish Geographic Society titled "Lieutenant Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband (1863-1942)" is interesting:

"Younghusband was wined and dined, and had a delightful conversation with the Russian military man, but was told in no uncertain terms to leave the area and return to British-controlled India the following day. His Russian host was very explicit in his instructions, telling Younghusband that he could not travel via any of the 20 or so mountain passes, which were each treacherous but were the only known routes back to India. The intention was to force Younghusband east to China or west through Afghanistan and Persia, either of which routes could easily have led to his arrest or death. Being an honourable man, Younghusband agreed, and he left the following morning with a small party".

In 1891 the British mounted the Hunza-Nagar Campaign and gained control of Hunza and the neighbouring valley of

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¹⁴The Heart of a Continent By Francis Edward Younghusband, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi & Madras, 1993, Page 186.

Nagar. Mir Safdar Khan, the last of Hunza's independent rulers escaped to China and his younger brother Mir Mohammad Nazim Khan was installed by the British as Mir in September 1892. Thereafter, Hunza became a princely state in a subsidiary alliance with British India, a status it retained until 1947.

At the time of partition, the Kuomintang Republic of China engaged in secret negotiations with the Mir of Hunza to restore the State's previous relations with China. The Mir of Hunza however did not accept the Chinese suggestions.

Historically the people of Hunza cultivated and grazed areas to the north, and the Mir claimed those areas as part of Hunza's territories. Those areas included the Taghdumbash Pamir and the Raskam Valley.

According to Kanjuti traditions, as related by Capt AH McMahon, the Mir's eighth ancestor, Shah Salim Khan, pursued nomadic Kirghiz thieves to Tashkurghan and defeated them. "To celebrate this victory, Shah Salim Khan erected a stone cairn at Dafdar and sent a trophy of a Khirghiz head to the Chinese with a message that Hunza territory extended as far as Dafdar" 15. The Kanjutis were already in effective possession of the Raskam and no question had been raised about it. The Mir's claims went a good deal beyond a mere right of cultivation. He "asserts that forts were built by the Hunza people without any objection or interference from the Chinese at Dafdar, Qurghan, Ujadhbhai, Azar on the Yarkand River and at three or four other places in Raskam."

McMahon was able roughly to define the territorial limits of Kanjut. "The boundaries of Taghdumbash, Khunjerab, and Raskam, as claimed by the Kanjuts, are the following: the northern watershed of the Taghdumbash Pamir from the Wakhjir Pass through the Baiyik peak to Dafdar, thence across

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¹⁵Captain AH Macmahon "Hunza's Relations with China"

the river to the Zankan nullah; thence through Mazar and over the range to Urok, a point on the Yarkand river between Sibjaida and Itakturuk. Thence it runs along the northern watershed of the Raskam valley to the junction of the Bazar Dara River and the Yarkand River. From thence southwards over the mountains to the Mustagh River leaving the Aghil Dewan or Aghil Pass within Hunza limits."

McMahon's information was substantially corroborated in 1898 by Captain H. P. P. Deasy, who resigned his commission to devote himself to trans-Himalayan exploration. An item of special interest was Deasy's description of the limits of Raskam. Starting from Aghil Dewan or pass, in the Karakoram range, the dividing line ran north-east to Bazar Dara, where it met the Yarkand River. He found an outpost built of earth at Bazar Dara, surmounted by a Chinese flag (by 1898 the Chinese had intruded to the area south of the Kun Lun Mountains with a few unarmed Kirghiz in occupation). This was obviously intended as a Chinese boundary marker. From there the line ran "along the northern watershed of the Raskam valley to Dafdar in the Taghdumbash Pamir, to the north of the mills at that place, and thence to the Baiyik peak. Deasy also came upon clear evidence of what could only have been Kanjuti occupation. South of Azgar "many ruins of houses, old irrigation channels and fields now no longer tilled, testify to Raskam having formerly been inhabited and cultivated" 16

Maj Gen Sir John Ardagh, the then ADC to the C-in-C in India prepared a Memorandum titled 'The Northern Frontier of India from the Pamirs to Tibet', submitted by him on 1 January 1897 in which he proposed a proposed a border with China that was demarcated on naturalgeographic borders. Based on his recommendation, in March 1899 the British proposed a new boundary between China and British India

¹⁶History of the state of Hunza @ https://www.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=State%20of%20Hunza&item type=topic

under a formal Note from Sir Claude MacDonald known as the Macartney-Macdonald (in short, the Macdonald) line.

The Note proposed that China should relinquish its claims to suzerainty over Hunza, and in return Hunza should relinquish its claims to most of the Taghdumbash and Raskam districts.

The Chinese did not respond to the Note, and the British took that as acquiescence.

The Macdonald line was modified in 1905 to include in India a small area east of the Shimshal Pass, to put the border on the Oprang Jilga River and a stretch of the Shaksgam River.

In 1926, Kenneth Mason a soldier and geographer and the first statutory Professor of Geography at the University of Oxford explored and surveyed the Shaksgam Valley. He was then only the second European after Younghusband to visit the valley. Mason had used photo-theodolite and stereographic techniques for his survey which won him the Royal Geographic Society's Founder's Gold Medal in 1927, besides other accolades. The following extract from Kenneth Mason's Presentation to the Geographical Society are self-speaking on the mission and objectives of his expedition:

The expedition was directed by my own department, the Survey of India, at Dehra Dun. The other members of my party were Major Minchinton, m.c, of the 1st Gurkhas; Major Clifford, d.s.o., m.c, Indian Medical Service; Captain Cave, M.c, the Rifle Brigade; Khan Sahib Afraz Gul Khan, Survey of India; one Pathan orderly from the Survey; and three Gurkha sepoys. We took three cooks for this party, but no other servants.

The main object of the expedition was to survey the unexploredmountains and valleys

west of pass "G," especially the following:

- (1) Valley "H."
- (2) The sources and course of the Shaksgam.
- (3) The northern glaciers of the Karakoram range.
- (4) The Aghil range and mountains north of the Shaksgam.

We were also to explore for traces of any human occupation or passage, ancient or modern, in this area. Subsidiary points requiring investigation cropped up during the preliminary arrangements, and were undertaken.

Some of these do not closely concern geography, but I must mention that Clifford and I took up field geology, Cave the collection of birds and meteorological study, while Minchinton and Clifford decided to collect butterflies and plants respectively. The various results are now being worked out by experts". 17

A discussion followed Mason's presentation in which Sir Francis Younghusband and Maj RC Clifford participated. Excerpts from their descriptions of the area provide interesting insights:

Sir Francis Younghusband: In case I forget to do so later, I must commence by associating myself with all that Major Mason has said as regards the splendid work of the Ladakhi

¹⁷The Shaksgam Valley and Aghil Range Kenneth Mason; The Geographical Journal Vol. 69, No. 4 (Apr., 1927), pp. 289-323

coolies he had with him. No one who has undertaken explorations in those parts can fail to understand how much he is indebted to those men upon whom, fundamentally, the whole success of the expedition depends. It is a great delight to me to know that the fine old traditions of the Ladakhis, their staunchness and loyalty, are still maintained. They do not help entirely for the sake of pay, because after all what explorers are able to give them does not amount to much. The Ladakhis have a real spirit of adventure. I am quite sure that when any one comes along who is out for a big adventure the Ladakhis are ready enough to join, and it is by appealing to that spirit of adventure that one gets the best work out of them. As a result of the work of Major Mason himself, of his indefatigable colleague, the Khan Sahib Afraz Gul, and of the other members of the expedition, we now have an accurate map of that region which joins up with the Duke of the Abruzzi's farthest surveys and just leaves room for my rough reconnaissance of the Shaksgam river in 1889. And now that that map work is done we can get on in future with the real business of a geographer, which I always consider to be the description of the beauty of the region which he is in. And this particular region is one of the finest in the whole world. The photographs you have seen to-night have given you some idea of it. We generally hear from travellers in such regions as this that it is not possible to describe the beauty of what they have seen, but at any rate Major Mason this evening, with the gallantry of an explorer, has made some slight attempt to achieve the

impossible, and he has given us an idea of what the beauty of K2 at dawn can be. What I very much hope is that some time just one traveller by himself will go up into that K2 region and then, with nothing else to think of now he has a map made for him, devote himself entirely to describing either in words or (like the great predecessor of Major Mason in the Survey of India, Colonel Tanner), in pictures what the glories of it are. I do not suppose that in the whole Himalaya, except perhaps in Nepal, where Mount Everest can be seen from the south, is there such a magnificent array of mountain majesty as may be seen in that splendid panorama of peaks?K2, 28,250 feet; another peak of 27,000 feet; four others of 26,000 feet; and others of 24,000 feet. The distinguishing features are the ruggedness and jaggedness, the austerity and dazzling purity of those mountain summits. And not until we have a description in painting or in words of the beauty of this region will the geography of it be complete. In conclusion, I should like to say what an immense satisfaction it is to me to feel that the means by which we have been able to join up the rough reconnaissance I made in 1889 with the entirely accurate survey made by Major Mason was by observation of the stars for latitude. I like to feel the stars joined in our minds with those highest mountains....."

Major R. C. Clifford (Indian Medical Service):All along the Yarkand and its tributaries we came on many herds of antelope, the same Tibetan antelope that exists to the east in the Chang-chhenmo, and in Tibet. I am told

that this is interesting because it shows that these antelopes exist much farther west than was previously recorded. Also on the lower slopes of the hills in the valley which Colonel Wood called "I" valley, and which is now named the Lungmo-chhe, there were large herds of burrhel, which were undoubtedly the same species as are found nearer towards India, though heavier in the head than those found towards the Karakoram range..... The road by the Yarkand river is very easy, once you get over the Saser pass and the Depsang plains. In the Lungmo-chhe valley there are a number of protected spots. There is another interesting question which I think somebody ought to be able to work out if he can get there earlier than we did. We reached the Yarkand river towards the end of June, which is, I think, too late to see the trek of the herds of wild horses which live up in that part of the world.... We were, unfortunately, just too late to see these herds of wild horses, but I am sure they come there by their markings, which were quite fresh, and they extend right up near the head of the Lungmochhe; but they stop short of the gorge which exists before you get right up into the glaciers which Major Mason showed in his picture at the head of the valley. The rest of the fauna are a sort of mouse-hare, quite common in other parts of the Himalayan regions, and a certain number of birds. We came across birds which are represented in India and in the higher Himalayas by almost identical types, such as the wagtail and finches of various kinds..... Major Mason has added a great deal to our knowledge, but there remains a

goodly portion about which we really know absolutely nothing. As Sir Francis has said, the district probably contains the finest group of mountains of any similar area in the world. I have had the good fortune at various times to pass along the north side of practically the whole of the Himalayas, a side which is not very often seen, but from where one gets better views than from anywhere else, and I certainly have never seen such scenery as one finds in the Karakorams. ... I do not want to dispute Major Mason's wisdom in deciding to go across the range to the north. I should certainly, in his place, have done the same thing. It is rather being wise after the event, but I cannot help feeling that I should like that someone had gone down that valley. There is one other point, one which Major Mason did not touch on to-night, but which is given in his full report. He suggests that the name "Karakoram " should be changed to "Muz-tagh," and as he quotes a letter of mine, I am afraid this might lead you to think that I am in agreement with that suggestion. I do not like changes of names. I do not think they are advisable, and more particularly when a name has been in existence, as this one has, for about sixty or seventy years. It is quite possible that the Karakoram pass is not on the main axis of the ranges known as the Karakorams; I think when the name was given, sixty or seventy years ago, it was intended as a regional name, very much like the Himalayas and many others of mountain regions. The mass of mountains is generally known as the "Karakorams," and not as the Karakoram range." To apply definitely

that name to one particular ridge, as has sometimes been done, is, I think, a mistake; because I do not consider we have sufficient knowledge at the present moment to say how all the various ridges run. I therefore would like to register a protest against any change of the name. I am sorry, however, to have to disagree with Major Mason, and I hope he will forgive me, particularly after the very interesting lecture that he has given us tonight.

From 1947 India claimed sovereignty over the entire area of the pre-1947 independent state of Jammu and Kashmir, and therefore maintained that Pakistan and China did not share a common border.

The Sino-Pakistan Frontier Agreement

In 1959, Chinese maps were published showing large areas west and south of the Macdonald line as being in China. The Pakistan government became concerned over these Chinese claims as reflected in these maps and in 1961, President Ayub Khan sent a formal note to China on the matter. **The Chinese however did not respond to that note.**

In 1962, the Government of Pakistan had published an official map depicting the alignment of the northern Border of Kashmir which showed much of the Cis-Kuen Lun Tract as being part of Kashmir.

In January 1962, after Pakistan voted to grant China a seat in the United Nations, the Chinese withdrew the disputed maps and in March 1962, agreed for border talks with Pakistan. Negotiations between the nations officially began

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¹⁸TThe Shaksgam Valley and Aghil Range: Discussion; Francis Younghusband, R. C. Clifford and H. WoodThe Geographical Journal Vol. 69, No. 4 (Apr., 1927), pp. 323-332.

on October 13, 1962 and resulted in an agreement signed on 2 March 1963 by foreign ministers Chen Yi of China and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan.

(A comparison with the dispute with China on the Aksai Chin is interesting. The 1962 Sino-India war is rooted in the 'Johnson line' of 1865, named after W. H. Johnson, a civil servant with the Survey of India which put Aksai Chin in Jammu and Kashmir. Though the Maccartney-Mcdonald line had put this region in China, the Maharaja of Kashmir considered the territory as being in his jurisdiction and reflected this in the maps of his State, which is the position inherited by India. In 1956-57, China constructed a road connecting Xinjiang and Tibet through Aksai Chin that was south of the Johnson Line in many places and was featured on Chinese maps since 1959, around the time areas of the Trans Karakoram tract were also shown as part of China. Around the time negotiations between China and Pakistan on that region were underway in October 1962, the Sino-Indian issue instead led to a war between the nations).

AG Noorani, the distinguished Journalist, has an interesting take on this Agreement. In his article "What We Know and What We Do Not Know, The SINO-PAK Boundary Agreement" he states that "It was not China which pressed Pakistan for a settlement. On the contrary it dragged its feet. It obviously preferred to settle with India first. It was Pakistan who pressed for an accord, not to forge an alliance with China – and thus wreck its alliance with the United States – but to profit by India's experience and secure peace and tranquillity in the area. It had been disturbed by China's patrols".

Negotiations between Pakistan and China concluded in 1963 with the signing of an agreement by nations, represented by Pakistani Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi on March 2, 1963 that allowed China to occupy over 5,800 square kilometers of territory of

the Shaksgam, Raskam, Shimshal and Aghil valleys of Gilgit Baltistan. In agreeing to give up this territory, Pakistan had not taken into confidence or sought consent of the local people. The Ruler of Hunza, who had claimed the territory upto the Aghil pass was threatened with imprisonment and torture to acquiesce to the deal.

The text of the agreement is as follows:

The Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of Pakistan; HAVING agreed, with a view to ensuring the prevailing peace and tranquillity on their respective border, to formally delimit and demarcate the boundary between China's Sinkiang and the contiguous areas the defence of which is under the actual control of Pakistan, in a spirit of fairness, reasonableness, mutual understanding and mutual accommodation, and on the basis of the ten principles as enunciated in the Bandung conference. Being convinced that this would not only give full expression to the desire of the people of China and Pakistan for the development of good neighbourly and friendly relations, but also help safeguard Asian and world peace.

Have resolved for this purpose to conclude the present agreement and have appointed as their respective plenipotentiaries the following.

For the Government of the People's Republic of China; Chen Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

For the Government of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Minister of External Affairs. Who, having mutually examined their full powers and found them to be in good and due form have agreed upon following:

Artícle 1

In view of the fact that the boundary between China's Sinkiang and the contiguous areas the defence of which is under the actual control of Pakistan has never been formally delimited, two parties agree to delimit it on the basis of the traditional customary boundary line including features and in a spirit of equality, mutual benefit and friendly cooperation.

Artícle 2

In accordance with the principle expounded in Article 1 of the present agreement, the two parties have fixed as follows the alignment of the entire boundary line between China's Sinkiang and the contiguous areas the defence of which is under the actual control of Pakistan.

1 Commencing from its north western extremity at height 5,630 metres (a peak the reference coordinates of which are approximatelylongitude74 degrees34 minutes east and latitude 37 degrees 3 minutes north), the boundary line runs generally eastward and then South-eastward strictly along the main watershed between the tributaries of the Tashkurgan River of the Tarim river system on the one hand on the tributes of the Hunza river of the Indus river system on the other hand, passing through the Kilik Daban (Dawan), the Mintake Daban (pass), the Kharchanai Daban (named on the Chinese

map only), the Mutsgila Daban (named on the Chinese map only) and the Parpik Pass (named on the Pakistan map only) and reaches the Khunjerab (Yutr) Daban (Pass).

- 2 After passing through the Khunjerab (Yutr) Daban (pass) the boundary line runs generally southward along the above-mentioned main watershed up to a mountain-top south of the Daban (pass), where it leaves the main watershed to follow the crest of a spur lying generally in a south-easterly direction, which is the watershed between the Akjilga river (a nameless corresponding river on the Pakistan map) on the one hand, and the Taghumbash (Oprang) river and the Koliman Su (Oprang Jilga) on the other hand. According to the map of the Chinese side, the boundary line, after leaving the south-eastern extremity of the spur, runs along a small section of the middle line of the bed of the Koliman Su to reach its confluence with the Kelechin river. According to the map of the Pakistan side, the boundary line, after leaving the south-eastern extremity of this spur, reaches the sharp bend of the Shaksgam or Muztagh river.
- 3 From the aforesaid point, the boundary lines runs up the Kelechin river (Shaksgam or Muztagh river) along the middle line of its bed its confluence (reference coordinates approximately longitude 76 degrees 2 minutes east and latitude 36 degrees 26 minutes north) with the Shorbulak Daria (Shimshal river or Braldu river).
- 4 From the confluence of the aforesaid two rivers, the boundary line, according to the

map of the Chinese side, ascends the crest of a spur and runs along it to join the Karakoram range main watershed at a mountaintop (reference coordinates approximately longitude 75 degrees 54 minutes east and latitude 36 degrees 15 minutes north) which on this map is shown as belonging to the Shorgulak mountain. According to the map of the Pakistan side, the boundary line from the confluence of the above mentioned two river ascends the crest of a corresponding spur and runs along it, passing through height 6.520 meters (21,390 feet) until it joins the Karakoram range main watershed at a peak (reference coordinates approximately longitude 75 degrees 57 minutes east and latitude 36 degrees 3 minutes north).

Thence, the boundary line, running generally south-ward and then eastward strictly follows the Karakoram range main watershed which separates the Tarim river drainage system from the Indus river drainage system, passing through the east Mustagh Pass (Muztagh pass), the top of the Chogri peak (K2) the top of the Broad Peak, the top of the Gasherbrum mountain (8,068), the Indirakoli pass (names of the Chinese maps only) and the top of the Teram Kangri peak, and reaches its south-eastern extremity at the Karakoram Pass. Then alignment of the entire boundary line as described in section one of this article, has been drawn on the one million scale map of the Pakistan side in English which are signed and attached to the present agreement. In view of the fact that the maps of the two sides are not fully identical in their representation of topographical features the two

parties have agreed that the actual features on the ground shall prevail, so far as the location and alignment of the boundary described in section one is concerned, and that they will be determined as far as possible by bgint survey on the ground.

Article 3

The two parties have agreed that:

- i) Wherever the boundary follows a river, the middle line of the river bed shall be the boundary line; and that
- ii) Wherever the boundary passes through a deban (pass) the water-parting line thereof shall be the boundary line.

Artícle 4

One the two parties have agreed to set up, as soon as possible, a joint boundary demarcation commission. Each side will appoint a chairman(Chaudry Mohammad Aslam for the Pakistani side), one or more members and a certain number of advisers and technical staff. The joint boundary demarcation commission is charged with the responsibility in accordance with the provisions of the present agreement, to hold concrete discussions on and carry out the following tasks jointly.

1) To conduct necessary surveys of the boundary area on the ground, as stated in Article 2 of the present agreement so as to set up boundary markers at places considered to be appropriate by the two parties and to

delineate the boundary line of the jointly prepared accurate maps.

To draft a protocol setting forth in detail the alignment of the entire boundary line and the location of all the boundary markers and prepare and get printed detailed maps, to be attached to the protocol, with the boundary line and the location of the boundary markers shown on them.

- 2) The aforesaid protocol, upon being signed by representatives of the governments of the two countries, shall become an annex to the present agreement, and the detailed maps shall replace the maps attached to the present agreement.
- 3) Upon the conclusion of the abovementioned protocol, the tasks of the joint boundary demarcation commission shall be terminated.

Article 5

The two parties have agreed that any dispute concerning the boundary which may arise after the delimitation of boundary line actually existing between the two countries shall be settled peacefully by the two parties through friendly consultations.

Artícle 6

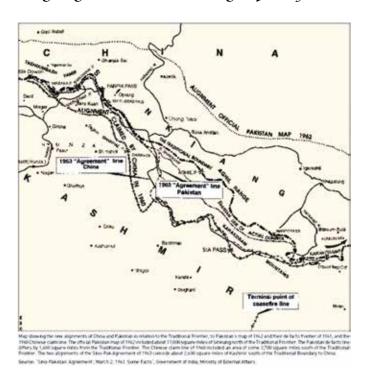
The two parties have agreed that after the settlement of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India, the sovereign authority concerned will reopen negotiations with the Government of the People's Republic of China

on the boundary as described in Article. Two of the present agreement, so as to sign a formal boundary treaty to replace the present agreement, provided that in the event of the sovereign authority being Pakistan, the provisions of the present agreement and of the aforesaid protocol shall be maintained in the formal boundary treaty to be signed between the People's Republic of China and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Article 7

The present agreement shall come into force on the data of its signature.

Done in duplicate in Peking on the second day of March 1963, in the Chinese and English languages, both side being equally authentic.



Post the Agreement with Pakistan, China has built feeder roads eastward through Shaksgam linking Gilgit with Hotan, a Military base located at the cross-section of the Tibet-Xinjiang Highway and Hotan-Golmud Highway.

<u>India's Position on Sino – Pak Boundary Agreement 1963</u>

India has not recognised the Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement as a legitimate decision nor accepted Pakistan's sovereignty over Gilgit Baltistan. As the agreement stated that it was between "China's Sinkiang and the contiguous areas the defence of which is under the actual control of Pakistan" India protested this as a de facto recognition of Pakistan control of Hunza and Baltistan. Prime Minister Nehru had remarked that China and Pakistan were going to demarcate the border "of the illegally occupied area of Kashmir with Sinkiang".

India's claim is that Pakistan had surrendered a large area of India to China. It is India's case that "According to the Survey of Pakistan maps, even those published in 1962, about 11,000 square miles of Sinkiang territory formed part of Kashmir. If one goes by these maps, Pakistan has obviously surrendered over 13,000 square miles of territory".

India protested the matter with China, and registered its concerns with the United Nations. China however guaranteed India that it accepted Gilgit Baltistan as a disputed territory and that the agreement was only provisional in nature and would be renegotiated once the dispute of Jammu & Kashmir was resolved.

India's (then) Minister of State for External Affairs, Smt. Praneet Kaur's Statement in the Lok Sabha on 15 July 2009, which is the latest stated position:

"The Government's position is that this so-called 'Boundary Agreement' is illegal and invalid. This has been reiterated to the Chinese side in the ongoing discussions on the boundary question."

Under "the so-called 'Boundary Agreement' of 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 km. of Indian territory in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir to China." Pakistan, she added, was in "illegal and forcible occupation of approximately 78,000 square kms. of Indian territory in Jammu and Kashmir since 1948 while 38,000 square kilometres were under the occupation of China".

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