

CLAWS Newsletter



Special Issue: PoJK Protests| Sep-Oct 25

by Nomita Chandola

Background of the Protests

- The unrest began on **September 29, 2025**, following a strike call by the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) over unfulfilled demands for constitutional and economic reforms.
- The movement seeks justice, local rights, economic parity, and political autonomy.
- It started peacefully, but escalated after police fired on demonstrators.

Communications Blackout and Shutdown of Life

Since Sunday noon, September 29, Pakistan-administered Jammu & Kashmir (PaJK) has faced a total communications blackout, with mobile, landline, and internet services suspended. Movement between PaJK and mainland Pakistan is heavily restricted, and journalists report intimidation and surveillance, making independent verification nearly impossible. Major districts—including Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Poonch, Neelum, Bhimber, and Palandari—remain completely shut down, with shops closed, roads deserted, and few vehicles in circulation. Protests have also been reported in Rawalakot and Sudhnoti, while international solidarity demonstrations took place in London and Bradford, where diaspora activists emphasised: *“We do not quarrel with the Army. Branding protesters as traitors only helps Pakistan’s enemies.”*

Government Inaction and Security Clampdown

The elected PML-N government in PoJK, led by Chaudhry Anwarul Haq, has remained silent throughout the crisis, with no statements from the Prime Minister or senior ministers. All communication and security decisions have been handled by the Chief Secretary, an Islamabad-appointed bureaucrat, underscoring the region’s limited autonomy. Observers describe a power vacuum, as elected representatives have been absent in the people’s hour of need.

Meanwhile, authorities claim to be taking “legal action” against alleged rioters, warning of strict measures against anyone “damaging property or inciting unrest.” However,

with a communications blackout in place, independent verification of casualties and incidents remains impossible, leaving the true extent of the crackdown unclear.

The Initial Violence

Location: Neelum Bridge, Muzaffarabad.

Incident: Clashes between JKJAAC demonstrators and a rival "peace rally" led by Muslim Conference leader Raja Saqib Majeed.

According to the Witnesses' accounts:

- Peace rally participants fired upon peaceful JKJAAC demonstrators "without provocation."
- Police protected the rival rally and used tear gas and live fire against JKJAAC supporters.

30th September 2025

- On [September 30, 2025](#), PoJK entered the second day of shutdown and protests led by the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC).
- Major rallies took place in Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, and Kotli, showing widespread public participation.
- Authorities sealed roads, blocked bridges, and suspended communications to prevent marches toward Muzaffarabad.
- Police firing in Muzaffarabad killed three protesters and injured over 20, intensifying anger.
- In Dudyal, protesters refused to bury a victim until demands were met.
- Motorbike rallies and mass gatherings continued despite restrictions.
- Diaspora protests were held in London, Birmingham, and Bradford under the JKNIA, condemning Pakistan's crackdown and expressing solidarity with PoJK protesters.

1st October 2025

- On [October 1, 2025](#), unrest in PoJK escalated with multiple civilian deaths and clashes between protesters and security forces.
- Protests, led by the JAAC, entered their third day, with over six killed and many injured.
- Demonstrations focused on a 38-point charter of demands, including lower electricity tariffs, subsidised flour, free education and healthcare, and ending political privileges.
- Police firing and shelling were reported in Muzaffarabad, Dheerkot, and Dadyal, intensifying tensions.
- JAAC agreed to consider talks under certain conditions, vowing to continue the shutdown and protests until its demands were met.
- Long marches from Neelum and Mirpur advanced toward Muzaffarabad despite restrictions.
- JAAC leader Raja Amjad Ali Khan was detained at Islamabad Airport, heightening anger among protesters.

2nd October 2025

- Protests in PoJK [spread further](#) after three youths were killed by Pakistani forces.
- Thousands attended their funerals in Muzaffarabad, turning the events into massive demonstrations.
- The lockdown and internet blackout continued, yet large protest caravans managed to break through blockades to join the agitation.
- Shops, markets, and transport services across Muzaffarabad and nearby districts remained completely shut, paralysing daily life.
- Opposition figures in Pakistan, including PTI's Syeda Zahr and Chaudhry Muddasar Raza Machhiana, publicly supported the protesters online.
- Neelum Valley leader Shaukat Nawaz Mir accused the government of media suppression and violence against civilians.
- The Dudyal Action Committee reiterated it would not bury a protester's body until demands were accepted.

3rd October 2025

- Leaders accused Pakistani authorities of firing on peaceful demonstrators at [Neelum Bridge](#) in Muzaffarabad, killing several and injuring over 20 protesters.
- JAAC leader Shaukat Nawaz Mir stated that armed “institutional facilitators” opened fire in the presence of police and administration, calling it a targeted attack on peaceful protesters.
- JAAC leader Faisal Jamil Kashmiri linked the ongoing protests to unfulfilled economic promises and the discriminatory 25% quota system dating back to 1947, amid 64% youth unemployment.
- India’s Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) condemned Pakistan’s “horrific human rights violations” in PoJK, calling the unrest a “natural consequence of Pakistan’s oppressive policies and exploitation” of the region.

4th October 2025

- After marathon talks, JAAC and Islamabad officials reached a [draft agreement](#) late Friday night, signaling a possible end to nearly a week of unrest in PoJK.
- Negotiations were held in Muzaffarabad, led by senior Pakistani ministers and JAAC leaders.
- The deal followed violent clashes that left at least 10 dead and many injured.
- Despite ongoing shutdowns and a communications blackout, around 15,000 protesters remained mobilised in Kohala.
- The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan condemned the excessive force used, while India renewed criticism of Pakistan’s human rights violations in PoJK.

After detailed deliberation and discussions, the following were **the decisions** that were [recorded](#):

1. FIRs shall be registered under relevant sections of Anti-Terrorism Act on incidents of violence and vandalism resulting in death of personnel belonging to LEAs and protesters. A judicial commission will be appointed where required.
2. Persons killed during incidents of 21 Sep and 1–2 Oct 2025 shall be compensated with monetary support linked to LEAs. Ghushtan injuries will be

compensated at the rate already determined per person. 4 govt. jobs shall be granted to one of the family members of each deceased person.

3. Two additional intermediate and secondary boards shall be notified for Muzaffarabad and Poonch Divisions. All 3 Intermediate and Secondary Boards of AJ&K shall be linked with Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Islamabad within 30 days.
4. The possibility of a high-end technical university at Mirpur district in case of Mangla Dam Raising Project will be examined.
5. The Local Government Elections Act 2015 shall be brought in conformity with the spirit of the Constitution of AJ&K and in accordance with judgments issued by Apex Courts within 90 days.
6. Govt of AJ&K shall set up a committee on the provision of health cards within 15 days.
7. MRI and CT Scan machines shall be provided phase-wise at each district of AJ&K through funding of Govt of Pakistan.
8. Govt of Pakistan will provide Rs 10 billion for improvement of electricity system in AJ&K (according to a release plan).
9. Size of the cabinet shall be reduced to 20 ministers and advisers. The number of administrative secretaries shall be maintained at a given time. Mergers like Civil Defence with Home Dept. and other similar mergers will be carried out for this purpose. The Ehtesab Bureau and Anti-Corruption Establishment shall be merged. The NAB Laws of GoP shall be brought in accordance with the NAB Laws of GoAJK.
10. Govt of Pakistan shall carry out feasibility study for construction of two tunnels at Patika/Kamsar (3.7 km) and Chakpian (6 km) of Neelum Valley Road (AJ&K). The project shall be prioritized as per PC-1 dated 6 Dec 2022 under Saudi Development Fund.
11. A high-powered committee comprising legal and constitutional experts will deliberate on the issue of members of AJ&K Assembly other than AJK constituencies. The committee shall include equal members from Govt of Pakistan, AJ&K Government and JAAC. Till submission of final report, existing provisions/concessions regarding allocation of funds/status of ministries under the existing arrangements will be held in abeyance.

Additional Points

1. For registration of FIRs in incidents of Banjosa (21 Sep 2025), Muzaffarabad (30 Sep–1 Oct), Dhirkot (1 Oct), Mirpur (2 Oct), Rian Koti (1 Oct), cases shall be referred to a Judicial Commission of High Court Judge.
2. Announcement of time frame for International Airport at Mirpur after consultation with AJK Govt and Civil Aviation Authority.
3. Taxes on transfer of property shall be brought at par with Punjab or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa within 3 months.
4. Implementation of 2019 decision of High Court regarding rival projects within financial year.
5. Feasibility study for provision of greater water supply scheme at 10 districts during current financial year.
6. Provision of funds for Operation Theatre and nurseries at all THQ Hospitals from ADP.
7. Construction of bridges at Gulpur and Rehman (Kotli) from ADP.
8. Reduction of advance tax on the sale of gold in Gilgit-Baltistan and Fata.
9. Follow Open Merit in admission to education institutions.
10. Water supply scheme and transmission line for Kashmir colony Dadyal, from ADP.
11. Grant of propriety rights to refugees of Mendor colony Dadyal.
12. Review of transport policy in light High Court decision with special reference to use of 1300 cc cars. Release of Kashmiri protestors arrested during various incidents in Rawalpindi and Islamabad on 2nd and 3rd October.

5th October 2025

- Demonstrations continued with small rallies and anti-corruption slogans, maintaining momentum since the unrest began on September 29.
- JAAC leader Raja Shoaib stated the movement represents the voice of the oppressed people of both PoJK and Pakistan, calling for unity against corruption.
- A second round of talks between JAAC and the Pakistani government was held in Muzaffarabad, following earlier failed negotiations over elite privileges and reserved refugee seats.

- Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry stated that most demands had been accepted, with constitutional amendments required for the remaining issues, urging a resolution through peaceful dialogue.

7th October 2025

Pakistan's "peace deal" with protesters in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) is drawing criticism as a misleading attempt to buy time and divert global attention from decades of repression in the region.

- Human rights activist Tasleema Akhter condemned Pakistan's continued illegal occupation of PoJK and Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGB).
- Locals reportedly face political marginalisation, economic deprivation, and systematic violence by the Pakistan Army.
- Despite Islamabad's claims of promoting peace and development, resources are exploited while the population remains in poverty.
- The so-called peace agreements are viewed as propaganda tools to maintain military control.
- Akhter reaffirmed that both regions are integral parts of India, calling on the UN and global rights groups to hold Pakistan accountable.
- Citizens of PoJK and PoGB are demanding justice, freedom, and dignity, rejecting Pakistan's "deceptive" peace gestures.

About the Author

Nomita Chandola is a dedicated scholar in International Relations, with a strong academic foundation and a passion for understanding complex global issues. She recently earned her master's degree in International Relations from the University of Leeds, where she focused on modules such as global governance and climate security. Prior to this, she completed her bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Economics from Kamla Nehru College, University of Delhi.

Currently, Nomita is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies, where she delves into critical issues of strategic affairs and geopolitical dynamics. Her primary area of interest lies in South Asian studies, emphasising security dynamics and their intersections with global politics. She aspires to pursue a PhD to further explore these themes. With a keen eye for policy analysis and research, Nomita aims to contribute meaningfully to the academic and policy discourse on international security and regional stability.



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