

INDIA DIGEST

(Thematic Survey of major Current Developments)

No. 2

February 2010

India and the OIC Special Emissary for Kashmir, October 2009

1. Recent Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Meeting in New York, 3 October, 2009.

It is regrettable that the OIC has commented on India's internal affairs. We condemn and reject this. Inherent in OIC's statements and actions on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir is a complete inability to understand India's position. Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and it is our firm position that the OIC has no locus standi in matters concerning India's internal affairs.

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi

<http://meaindia.nic.in/pressrelease/2009/10/03pr02.htm>

2. OIC calls for prompt resolution of Kashmir dispute, 30 September 2009.

UNITED NATIONS (APP)- A ministerial-level panel of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on Monday [28 September] adopted a declaration expressing regret that India had put a "pause" on the dialogue with Pakistan and called for the prompt resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

The OIC Contact Group, which met on the sidelines of the 64th session of UN General Assembly on Monday [28 September], welcomed the July meeting between prime ministers of India and Pakistan in Sharm el-Sheikh, saying that dialogue between the two neighbours was the only way forward.

In this regard, the declaration took note of India's statement after the Sharm el-Sheikh meeting that it was ready to discuss all issues with Pakistan, including Jammu and Kashmir.

The declaration, which was unanimously adopted, called for a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute “in accordance with UN resolutions and as agreed upon in the 1972 Simla Agreement”. The Contact Group met under the chairmanship of OIC secretary- general Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu for an annual review of the development relating to the decades-old dispute Kashmir dispute. Opening the meeting, the OIC secretary-General expressed the organization’s solidarity with the Kashmiri people and hoped that the peace process between India and Pakistan would resume soon and become result-oriented.

Attending the meeting, held in a UN conference room, were Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu and ambassadors of Saudi Arabia and Niger, representing their respective foreign ministers. The Pakistan delegation was led by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, who underscored the imperative of a meaningful and result-oriented dialogue to amicably resolve the Kashmir dispute. “We believe that a settlement of this long festering dispute can help establish durable peace in the region,” he said in a speech before the adoption of the declaration. “It can also open numerous vistas of mutually beneficial cooperation between Pakistan and India”.

Representatives of the Kashmiri people, from both the Indian-Occupied Kashmir and Azad Kashmir—APHC Chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan, respectively, also participated in the meeting. In addition, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, executive director of the Kashmiri-American Council, was present.

Recalling previous OIC and relevant UN resolutions, the Contact Group urged India and Pakistan to “expeditiously resolve all outstanding issues, including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir.” The declaration referred to the murder in May of two Kashmiri women in Shopian and condemned all human rights violations being committed against the people of Kashmir. It called on India to put an end to the suffering of Kashmiri people by repealing the “draconian laws” imposed in Kashmir.

The declaration also urged the international community to take “effective steps” for safeguarding the rights of Kashmiri people, including the right to self-determination. It asked India to allow an OIC fact-finding mission in Indian-occupied Kashmir, and to cooperate with Pakistan, the UN and the international community and to accept the strengthening of UNMOGIP, the UN observer force monitoring the Line of Control in the disputed state. In his opening remarks, OIC Secretary General Ihsanoglu reiterated OIC’s continued support to the Kashmiri people in their struggle to achieve their right to self- determination. Addressing the Contact Group, the Pakistan foreign minister said even after the passage of sixty years, the Kashmiri people continue to demand their basic right to self-determination promised to them by the international community. “For years, Pakistan, OIC, and the international community, have expressed concern on the consistent violation of human rights of the Kashmiri people,” Qureshi said. “Unfortunately, the Indian security forces have shown little regard for these expressions of concern.

The violations which are a direct result of massive presence of Indian security forces in Indian occupied Kashmir continue”. Last year’s indigenous uprising ignited by the Amarnath Shrine land issue had added another sad chapter to the sufferings of the Kashmiri people, the Pakistani foreign minister said. “The Kashmiris were subjected to prolonged economic blockade. Their lives and properties were attacked. Many Kashmiris were martyred including Sheikh Abdul Aziz, a prominent Hurriyat leader. “These events are a reflection of the indigenous struggle of the Kashmiri people for “Azadi”.” The Government and the people of Pakistan, he said, have stood by their Kashmiri brethren. “As in the past, we condemn the use of force and demand respect for human rights of the people of Kashmir”. Davutoglu, the Turkish foreign minister, reaffirmed his country’s support for the Kashmiri people’s struggle and expressed solidarity with them. He urged the international community to help bring about a lasting settlement of the Kashmir dispute. The minister also called for improvement in the human rights conditions of the Kashmiri people and an end to their sufferings.

Ambassadors of Saudi Arabia and Niger also voiced solidarity with the Kashmiri people and called for steps to bring about a durable settlement of the Kashmir dispute. Mirwaiz Farooq gave an extensive background to the Kashmir dispute and enumerated in detail the atrocities committed by Indian security forces, saying more than 100,000 innocent civilians have been killed in the past 20 years. In resolving the Kashmir issue, he said time was of essence and would require a continuation of Kashmiri representation in a more desirable tripartite format. “Kashmiri involvement in the talks can and will be the key to finding a lasting solution of the dispute”.

The APHC chairman called for the demilitarization of the state as the first step towards reducing Indian and Pakistani forces; allowing Kashmiris to freely express their views; release of all political prisoners; repealing of draconian laws; withdrawal of troops from urban areas and city centres; dismantling bunkers, and allowing Kashmiri political leaders to travel abroad. “Our endeavour to resolve the Kashmir issue is not just a quest for peace for the people, we cannot overlook that South Asia is a region that is expanding, growing and becoming more and more a major player and competitor in international markets,” Farooq said. “While we are not opposed to India’s unprecedented growth, we want India to allow Kashmir to grow and prosper as well.” Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan also made a strong case for the Kashmiri people’s right to self-determination.

“The international community, particularly OIC countries, must impress on India to immediately repeal its repressive laws and put an end to the gross human rights violations against the innocent Kashmiris.” “We have shown the required resolve and steadfastness in the course of our struggle. It is our belief that the sufferings and enormous sacrifices made by the Kashmiri people will be ultimately rewarded.”

Source: Tehran Times

http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=204265

3. OIC appoints special envoy on Kashmir, 3 October 2009.

United Nations: The Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC), a grouping of 57 Islamic nations, has appointed a special envoy on Jammu and Kashmir, a move seen as part of Pakistan's efforts to internationalise the issue.

The OIC made the announcement after a meeting of its contact group on Kashmir at the United Nations.

The appointment of Abdullah Bin Adbul Rahman Al Bakr, a Saudi national, as the special OIC envoy on J&K, was welcomed by Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who also held a series of meetings with the leaders of the Muslim countries raising the issue of alleged violations of human rights in Kashmir.

The contact group was addressed by the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Niger.

The Mirwaiz, Pakistan occupied Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Yaqoob and Ghulam Nabi Fai, head of the Washington-based separatist Kashmir American Council, also addressed the meeting.

Now that Pakistan and the separatist leaders have succeeded in having an OIC special envoy, they have started lobbying the U.N. and its Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for a special U.N. envoy on Kashmir.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.hinduonnet.com/2009/10/03/stories/2009100357780100.htm>

4. India snaps at Islamic group for naming Kashmir envoy, 3 October 2009.

New Delhi: India on Saturday [3 October] condemned as "regrettable" the decision by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to name a special envoy for Kashmir.

"It is regrettable that the OIC has commented on India's internal affairs. We condemn and reject this," the External Affairs Ministry said in New Delhi.

"Inherent in OIC's statements and actions on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir is a complete inability to understand India's position," it said in a statement.

Asserting that "Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India", it said: "It is our firm position that the OIC has no locus standi in matters concerning India's internal affairs."

The OIC, which promotes Muslim solidarity in political, social and economic matters, appointed Saudi Arabian Abdullah bin Abdul Rahman as special envoy to Kashmir last week. The step is believed to be influenced by Pakistan.

This is the first time the OIC, which routinely issues resolutions on Kashmir, has taken a decision of this kind.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, chairperson of Jammu and Kashmir's separatist All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), has welcomed the move.

"We believe the OIC appointing a special envoy on Kashmir is a significant development. We want Muslim countries to use their good offices to persuade India to work on Kashmir," he told a 'contact group' of OIC in Washington.

Source: IBNLive, New Delhi

<http://www.ibnlive.in.com/.../india-snaps-at-islamic-group-for-naming...envoy/102636-3.html>

5. Special Envoy on Kashmir to bridge Indo-Pak differences: OIC, 3 October 2009.

Appointment of Special Envoy for Jammu and Kashmir by Organizations of Islamic Countries would help bridge the gap between India and Pakistan and address the issue of minorities in India, a top OIC official has said.

"The role of the Special Envoy is to help in bridging the gap between the two countries namely Pakistan and India," OIC Secretary General, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu told PTI.

He was in Washington to meet US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Ihsanoglu of Turkey, who heads Jeddah-based IOC – a grouping of 57 member Muslim countries—said this was not for the first time that a Special Envoy for Jammu and Kashmir has been appointed.

OIC, early this week, had announced the appointment of Abdullah Bin Adbul Rahman Al Bakr, a Saudi national and OIC's Assistant Secretary General of Political Affairs, as the Special OIC Envoy on Jammu and Kashmir at a meeting at the UN headquarters in New York.

"This is nothing new. (It is) just a continuation of the previous Special Representative. You know there has been a decision taken years back asking OIC Secretary General to appoint Special Envoy," Ihsanoglu said.

Source: Hindustan Times, New Delhi

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/.../Special-Envoy-on-Kashmir-to-bridge-Indo-Pak-differences-OIC/Article1-460737.aspx>

6. India condemns OIC statement on J&K, 3 October 2009

India on Saturday (3 October) condemned and rejected the observations of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) on Jammu and Kashmir and said the grouping had no locus standi on matters concerning the country's internal affairs.

"It is regrettable that the OIC has commented on India's internal affairs. We condemn and reject this," External Affairs Ministry spokesman Vishnu Prakash said in New Delhi.

"Inherent in OIC's statements and actions on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir is a complete inability to understand India's position," he said.

Prakash asserted that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and "it is our firm position that the OIC has no locus standi in matters concerning India's internal affairs".

The meeting of the 56-nation grouping of Islamic countries in New York earlier this week issued a statement, saying it supported people of Jammu and Kashmir in "realisation of their legitimate right of self determination in accordance with relevant UN resolutions and aspirations of Kashmiri people."

Among other things, the statement also commented on the human rights situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the death of two women in mysterious circumstances in Shopian recently.

Source: Hindustan Times, New Delhi

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-condemns-OIC-statement.../H1-Article1-460901.aspX>

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Source: The Hindu, Chennai, <http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article28486.ece>

8. India condemns OIC statement on J&K, 4 October 2009

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Source: New Indian Express, Chennai

<http://www.expressbuzz.com/.../story.aspx?...India+condemns+OIC+statement...J&K...J&K,%20India,%20OIC>

9. India condemns OIC's appointment of envoy, 4 October 2009.

India has reacted strongly to the attempt of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference to meddle in its “internal affairs” by “appointing” a special envoy on Jammu and Kashmir.

This is the second time this year that India has objected to the OIC “meddling” in its internal affairs.

While India is not a member of the OIC, the Foreign Office here sees Pakistan playing an active role at the forum to unsettle India, underplay its achievements vis-à-vis Islamabad and even minimise the impact of terrorist incidents such as the Mumbai attacks in November last year.

“It is regrettable that the OIC has commented on India’s internal affairs. We condemn and reject this,” said the Foreign Office while reacting to the “appointment” of a Saudi national as the special envoy on J&K after a meeting of its contact group on Kashmir.

“Inherent in the OIC’s statements and actions on the issue of J&K is a complete inability to understand India’s position. J&K is an integral part of India and it is our firm position that the OIC has no locus standi in matters concerning India’s internal affairs,” added the

Foreign Office’s statement. Angry words notwithstanding, diplomats were still trying to ascertain whether the “appointment” by an OIC subcommittee was a recommendation.

The OIC is one of the largest inter-governmental organisations after the United Nations and has membership of 57 countries.

The OIC has for long been pushing the Indian government to host a “fact finding mission” to Jammu and Kashmir. But with J&K separatists active at the OIC contact group on Kashmir and Pakistan, an involved party in the dispute being an active member, India has been reluctant to allow a misinterpretation of the scenario in the State.

In the latest instance, Hurriyat leaders had rushed to the media with the news of the OIC “appointing” an envoy on J&K. They had also spoken at the OIC contact group meeting along with leaders of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and some New York\Washington- based intellectuals who have been opposed to J&K in its present form being a part of India.

Diplomats here point out that at its previous summit, the OIC had praised Pakistan for holding the composite dialogue but did not comment on several confidence building measures initiated by India.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai, <http://www.beta.thehindu.com/news/article28586.ece>

10. J&K: India slams OIC’s appointment of envoy, 4 October 2009.

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Source: The Hindu, Chennai,

<http://www.thehindu.com/2009/10/04/.../2009100460750800.htm>

11. Keep off Kashmir, India tells OIC, 4 October 2009.

NEW DELHI: The Organisation of Islamic Conference's (OIC) remarks on the J&K issue at its meet in New York last week and its decision to appoint a special envoy evoked a stinging reaction from India on Saturday [3 October] with the foreign ministry stating that the inter-governmental body had shown a complete lack of understanding of New Delhi's stand on the issue.

Calling for an early settlement to the J&K issue, the OIC not only appointed a special envoy to "bridge the gap" between India and Pakistan but said that he would also deal with the issue of minorities in India.

Reiterating that J&K was an integral part of India, the foreign ministry said that OIC had no locus standi in matters concerning India's internal affairs. "It is regrettable that the OIC has commented on India's internal affairs. We condemn and reject this," it said.

The 57-nation grouping of Islamic countries had also issued a statement saying it supported the people of J&K in the "realisation of their legitimate right of self-determination in accordance with relevant UN resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people". It had also expressed concern over the recent Shopian incident.

The appointment of Saudi national Abdullah Bin Abdul Rahman Al Bakr, OIC's assistant secretary-general for political affairs, as the special envoy on J&K was immediately hailed by Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who had attended the meeting and raised the issue of human rights in the state. While some Indian officials described the appointment as just an administrative change as the post of special envoy on J&K had been there earlier too, others said the fresh appointment would help Pakistan internationalise the issue.

This, however, is not the first time the OIC has issued statements on J&K. In the past two years alone, it has made such statements at least three times undeterred by the fact that New Delhi has condemned it each time.

During the 36th session of the council of foreign ministers in Syria this May, OIC secretary-general Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu had said the grouping reaffirmed its "commitment and support to the Kashmiri freedom struggle". In the same meet, it also described the Mumbai attacks merely as an incident which led India to remark that the organisation had failed to address the issue of terrorism in unambiguous terms.

In June 2008, the OIC reaffirmed its commitment to the "Kashmiri struggle" and stressed the need to achieve a just and peaceful resolution to the long-standing issue. Two months later, in August, it condemned "the ongoing excessive and unwarranted use of force against the Kashmiri people" by India. On each of these occasions, Delhi reacted by saying that the OIC had no locus standi in India's internal matters. But the organisation continues to make such remarks, as Indian officials allege, at the behest of Pakistan which looks upon OIC as an important platform to internationalise the issue.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

<http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/...India...OIC/.../5085337.cms>

12. India slams OIC over J&K envoy, 4 October 2009.

New Delhi: Is it the failure of Indian diplomacy? Pakistan succeeded in its efforts to compel the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to appoint a special envoy for Jammu and Kashmir.

At its meeting in New York earlier this week, the OIC also stated that it supported people of Jammu and Kashmir in realisation of their legitimate right to self-determination in accordance with relevant UN resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

A fuming India today reacted sharply to the OIC action, dubbing it as interference in the internal affairs of this country.

“Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and it is our firm position that the OIC has no locus standi in matters concerning India’s internal affairs,” the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement.

Condemning the OIC move, New Delhi said inherent in its statements and actions on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir was a complete inability to understand India’s position.

The appointment of a Saudi national, Abdullah Bin Abdul Rahman Al Bakr, by the OIC as its envoy on Kashmir at its meeting in New York is being seen as a move initiated by Pakistan as part of its attempts to internationalise the Kashmir issue.

India has time and again told the international community, including major world powers, that Jammu and Kashmir is a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan and there is no room for third party intervention.

Under pressure from Pakistan, the OIC has at all its meetings adopted resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir, prompting New Delhi to condemn 57-member body’s action every time. Privately, however, many of the Islamic nations have repeatedly assured India that they are not in agreement with OIC resolutions on Kashmir but had to support them for the sake of unanimity and to keep Pakistan in good humour.

Pakistan received the active support of separatist Kashmiri leaders in its attempt to make the OIC agree to appoint a special envoy for Kashmir. Islamabad has now started lobbying with the UN and its Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to appoint a special envoy on Kashmir. It had made desperate attempts to convince the Obama administration also to include Kashmir in the agenda of Richard Holbrooke when he was being appointed the US President’s special envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Well aware that its action would draw a strong response from India, the OIC is now trying to play down the appointment of the special envoy.

OIC Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu was quoted as saying that the appointment would help bridge the gap between India and Pakistan and address the issue of minorities in India.

The OIC head said this was not the first time the OIC had appointed an envoy for Jammu and Kashmir. "This is just a continuation of the previous special representative. You know there has been a decision taken years back asking the OIC Secretary General to appoint a special envoy," he said.

Source: The Tribune, Chandigarh,

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2009/20091004/main2.htm>

13. Islamic bloc & China cheer for Valley rebels, 5 October 2009.

Srinagar, October. 4: Amid Indian worries over what it sees as interference in its internal affairs by Islamic countries and China, the foreign hand has breathed life into Kashmir's moribund separatist camp.

Triggering howls of protest from India, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has for the first time appointed a special envoy on Kashmir.

The appointment of Saudi national Abdullah Bin Abdur Rahman, during the OIC's recent New York meeting which was attended by moderate Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, has given a boost to the separatists who had been forced on the back foot following the more-than-expected turnout during the Assembly elections.

Also bringing cheer to the separatists was China, which started issuing stapled visas for Kashmiris heading for the neighbouring country, a move seen here as its acceptance of Kashmir as a disputed territory.

The separatists were virtually ruling the streets in Kashmir last year at the peak of the anti-Amarnath land agitation, but massive public participation in the Assembly elections later, in defiance of their calls for boycott, pushed them to the margins of Kashmir polity.

New Delhi too has been indifferent to the calls of moderates for a dialogue for resolving the Kashmir issue after they refused to take part in a round-table conference in 2006, arguing they will not share the table with the mainstream leaders.

India has been crying foul over the "interference" by OIC, an organisation of 57 Islamic countries, and China, but the separatists are on cloud nine.

"The OIC appointment of a special envoy on Kashmir is significant. We believe Muslim countries would use their good offices to persuade India to work on Kashmir," said Mirwaiz Farooq, who returned from New York yesterday [4 October] to a rousing reception.

Hurriyat hawk Syed Ali Geelani, who otherwise minces no words in hitting out at Farooq, hailed the separatists for “achieving this breakthrough”, though he refrained from naming the mirwaiz.

“For the first time, OIC has taken a giant step to address the issue of Kashmir. We hope New Delhi will now shun the rigid attitude and solve the Kashmir issue,” Geelani said.

The Hurriyat hardliner now plans to visit the Chinese embassy in Delhi to personally convey his gratitude to Beijing for issuing visas on a separate paper, an indication that it sees Kashmir as a disputed territory.

Source: The Telegraph, Kolkata,

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1091005/jsp/nation/story_11574580.jsp

14. Back-channel talks with India, Pak on: Mirwaiz, 7 October 2009

Srinagar: Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Tuesday [6 October] said that back-channel contacts have been opened to resume talks for the resolution of the Kashmir issue. He also called for allowing the special envoy for Kashmir, appointed by the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC), to visit Srinagar and help bridge the divide between India and Pakistan.

In his first media interaction since attending an OIC conference in New York, the Hurriyat chairman said time has come for the separatist leadership to take the initiative and restart dialogue with New Delhi and Islamabad.

"We should not depend on India and Pakistan. It is Kashmiris who are suffering. We want to hold talks with Delhi and Islamabad to resolve the Kashmir issue. Hurriyat be a bridge to bring both countries closer," said Mirwaiz. "Back channels have always been open with New Delhi and Islamabad. In the past month, considerable progress has been made to restart dialogue," he said.

However, Mirwaiz hastened to add that though they are keen to talk to Delhi, they are not in a hurry. "We want to do our homework before starting talks. Plus we want to have a consensus among separatist leaders because the time has come to shun egos and work to find a lasting solution to the Kashmir issue," he said.

The moderate Hurriyat leader also tried to clear the air about the OIC's stand, "OIC is a second biggest forum after UN. It should not either be seen as an anti-India or pro-Pak forum. They want to be a play a role in bringing India and Pakistan closer and help restart dialogue," he said. Mirwaiz urged Delhi to come out of the "denial mode" and allow the special envoy to visit J&K.

The Hurriyat chief said that Kashmir is again on the global agenda and New Delhi's attempt to tag it with terrorism has failed. "Everyone, be it the OIC or EU or US state department is keen to see that Kashmir is resolved for peace in south Asia," he said.

Source: DNA Mumbai

http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_back-channel-talks-with-india-pak-on-mirwaiz_1295679

15. Hurriyat to talk to Centre after consultation with others, 7 October 2009.

SRINAGAR: Hurriyat leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Tuesday [6 October] said that the amalgam would hold talks with the Centre only after consultation with other separatist parties and United Jihad Council the PoK-based alliance of 13 terror groups.

"We'll go to New Delhi for talks with a concrete agenda after consulting pro-freedom groups and UJC," Mirwaiz said. "The pro-freedom groups have to take the initiative for resolving the Kashmir dispute," he said. He claimed that the Kashmir issue was a political problem and had nothing to do with extremism and terrorism.

He said the Hurriyat would support any India-Pakistan dialogue process. "Kashmir issue will not come to the table as long as their ties aren't good," he said. He, however, said the dialogue won't yield anything as long as "Kashmiri leadership" isn't included in it.

He said the Hurriyat was planning to send its teams to Pakistan and New Delhi for defuse tension between the two countries.

Mirwaiz suggested that India, Pakistan and China should form a contact group for the Kashmir dispute's resolution.

The Mirwaiz clarified that the Organisation of Islamic Conference's move to appoint an envoy on Jammu and Kashmir last week was to bridge the gulf between India and Pakistan and resolve the Kashmir issue. "I'm disappointed with the New Delhi's response to the envoy's appointment," he said. "The OIC wants to bring both the countries close so that a viable atmosphere is created for peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue." He said India and Pakistan should allow the envoy to visit POK and Jammu and Kashmir.

New Delhi had taken umbrage to the envoy's appointment, saying OIC had shown complete lack of understanding of India's stand on the issue.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

<http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/.../Hurriyat-to-talk-to-Centre-after-consultation.../5094782.cms>

16. “Don’t withdraw forces from J&K”, 8 October 2009.

CHANDIGARH: Bharatiya Janata Party president Rajnath Singh on Wednesday [7October] asked the Union Government not to pull out security forces from Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to media persons here, he said ...

Condemning the decision of the Organisation of Islamic Conference [OIC] to appoint a special envoy for Kashmir, Mr. Rajnath Singh said that the Centre should oppose tooth and nail the “attempts” by Pakistan to internationalise the Kashmir issue. The Union Government should persuade the OIC to withdraw its envoy appointed for Kashmir, he added.

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Source: The Hindu, Chennai,

<http://www.thehindu.com/2009/10/08/.../2009100856240500.htm>

Chronology of Events

30 September – Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) calls for the resolution of Kashmir dispute.

03 October – OIC appoints special envoy for the said purpose; few students’ union in Kashmir took strong opposition against the appointment of a special envoy.

03 October - India criticises OIC statement on Jammu and Kashmir.

04 October – India’s condemnation continues and asks OIC to keep off Kashmir.

07 October- Hurriyat Conference Chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said the OIC move was a back-channel contact for the resolution of Kashmir dispute.

08 October- Rajnath Singh, the president of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of India criticises the decision of OIC to “internationalise” the Kashmir issue.

Compiled by Alvite N

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