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# India Protests as Pakistan Holds Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Elections

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# India Protests as Pakistan Holds Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Elections

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HOW

## WHY IN NEWS

Pakistan held **General Elections to the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly on June 7, 2026**, polling for 24 seats in territory it illegally occupies. The **Government of India lodged a strong protest**, reiterating that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including the so-called Gilgit-Baltistan, are an **integral and inalienable part of India**, and that Pakistan has no *locus standi* to hold any such exercise and must vacate the territory it illegally occupies.

## INDIA'S OFFICIAL POSITION

The **Government of India's stand** is settled and is the position a UPSC answer must take:

- Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India fully, legally and irrevocably through the **Instrument of Accession in 1947**.
- The entire UTs of **Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including Gilgit-Baltistan**, are integral and inalienable parts of India.
- India categorically rejects any attempt by Pakistan to bring **material change** to areas under its illegal occupation; such actions cannot alter the legal status.
- Pakistan illegally remains in possession of Indian territories, **which it must vacate**.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) conveyed this protest both before and after the polls.

## THE ELECTION

DETAIL	INFORMATION
Body	Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly
Seats polled	24
Date	June 7, 2026
Preliminary lead	Pakistan People's Party (PPP) ahead, followed by PML-N and independents

These elections do not confer any legitimacy on Pakistan's occupation, and India treats them as legally void.

## WHERE GILGIT-BALTISTAN FITS

ASPECT	DETAIL
Status	Part of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK); India holds it to be integral to India
Not a constitutional province	Pakistan administers GB without granting it full provincial status
Strategic significance	The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passes through it
Shaksgam Valley	Ceded by Pakistan to China in 1963; claimed by India
Karakoram Highway	Connects Pakistan to China through Gilgit-Baltistan

Gilgit-Baltistan's location makes it strategically central: it links Pakistan to China and is the conduit for the **CPEC**, a flagship of China's Belt and Road Initiative. India objects to CPEC precisely because it runs through Indian territory under illegal occupation.

## UPSC RELEVANCE

### Prelims

- Pakistan held Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly elections (24 seats) on **June 7, 2026**; India lodged a strong protest
- Gilgit-Baltistan is part of **Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK)**; integral part of India (GoI stand)

- J&K acceded to India in **1947** (Instrument of Accession)
- **CPEC** passes through Gilgit-Baltistan; the **Shaksgam Valley** was ceded by Pakistan to China in 1963
- India's position: Pakistan must vacate all illegally occupied territory

## Mains Angles

- 1 **GS2 India-Pakistan:** Examine India's consistent diplomatic response to Pakistan's periodic moves to legitimise its control over Gilgit-Baltistan.
- 2 **GS2 India-China:** Discuss how CPEC and the Shaksgam Valley link India's sovereignty concerns in Gilgit-Baltistan to its boundary dispute with China.
- 3 **GS2 Territorial Integrity:** Analyse the legal basis of India's claim to PoJK and the instruments it uses to assert it.

## FACTS CORNER

FACT	DETAIL
Event	Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly elections, June 7, 2026
Seats	24
India's response	Strong MEA protest
GB status	Part of PoJK; integral part of India (GoI stand)
J&K accession	1947 (Instrument of Accession)
CPEC	Passes through Gilgit-Baltistan; flagship of China's BRI
Shaksgam Valley	Ceded by Pakistan to China, 1963; claimed by India
India's demand	Pakistan must vacate illegally occupied territory

Sources: *MEA, News On Air, The Hindu*

Source: India Protests as Pakistan Holds Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Elections — [Ujiyari.com](http://Ujiyari.com) | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

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