

## SARDAR MASOOD KHAN INFORMS NIGERIAN DELEGATION OF ATROCITIES IN IOK

Sardar Masood Khan, President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has said that both Pakistan and Nigeria enjoy a strong relationship based on trade, bilateral cooperation and mutual interests.



The President made these comments while interacting with a seven-member delegation from the Federal Republic of Nigeria led by the Acting Director General of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies Mr. Jonathan Mela Juma who called on the President here at Jammu and Kashmir House. The delegation also comprised of Mr. Okeke John Chinaka, reporter Authority Newspaper Limited; Mr. Oporum Kingsley, Foreign Affairs Correspondent, Leadership Newspaper; Ms. Sadiyat Inoh Abah, Broadcast Journalist, Africa Independent Television; Mr. Munnir Dan Ali, Chief Executive Officer Media Trust Limited and Ms. Cicilia Umara Gayya, Director General, Administrative Staff College.

Talking on the occasion, the President welcomed the delegation to Pakistan and informed that Pakistan and Nigeria share similar ambitions for economic growth and human development. He said that

Pakistan is on the cusp of an economic revolution due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and growing economic activity. He expressed the hope that both these friendly countries would further improve their relations by reviewing opportunities of mutual interests.

The President on the occasion informed the delegation of AJK and its Government's priority towards accelerating its efforts for the realization of the right to self-determination of the people of Kashmir; promoting rule of law, justice, transparency, accountability and overall good governance; and its focus on economic and human development, especially towards road infrastructure, industry, agriculture, power generation, education and universal access to health. He also informed that the AJK Government is also working on enhancing health outreach to remote areas by introducing telemedicine/health facilities.

The President informed that AJK is now a formal part of the CPEC project. Currently, he said, two hydropower projects, an Industrial Zone in Mirpur and an expressway connecting Mirpur to the main route of the CPEC project via Mansehra are in different phases of planning and execution.

He said that despite AJK's small size, it has 5 Universities, 3 Medical Colleges and boasts the highest literacy rate in all of Pakistan. He added that with the lowest crime rate, AJK is the most peaceful region in Pakistan.

President Masood Khan also apprised the delegation of the situation in Indian Occupied Kashmir saying that the people of Azad Kashmir and Pakistan are traumatized as our Kashmiri brothers and sister are living under a brutal reign of terror in the occupied region. He said the Indian Occupation forces are committing unimaginable human rights violations and war crimes in IOK. The Kashmiri people are being killed, illegally incarcerated, womenfolk are being dishonoured and the

peaceful protests demanding their right to self-determination are being maimed and blinded by the use of illegal pellet guns, he said.

The President said that the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights has compiled a comprehensive list of human rights violations taking place in IOK. He said that draconian laws like the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and the Public Safety Act have given the Indian occupation forces sweeping powers to kill and illegally imprison innocent Kashmiris, and that too with absolute immunity from any kind of prosecution.

The President said that Pakistan wants to resolve the issue of Kashmir through peaceful and democratic means in the spirit of the UN Security Council's Resolutions. He said that India, on the other hand, wants to resolve the issue through the use of brute force and state terrorism. "India will never succeed in suppressing the peaceful freedom struggle of the Kashmiri people through the use of force", he said.

Responding to a question from one of the delegates, President AJK said that the international community must raise their voice in favour of the Kashmir people and ensure that they are allowed to exercise their political will through a free and fair plebiscite. He said that India's narrative that Kashmir is a bilateral issue between Pakistan and India is based on falsehood, as this matter is an official part of the UN Agenda and any political dispensation excluding the people of Kashmir would be impossible.

The President was informed by Mr. Jonathan that the delegation has also planned to visit AJK and will interact with senior government officials to help further understand the working of the AJK Government. The delegation also conveyed their gratitude for the hospitality received during their visit.