

**FROM PRINCELY AUTONOMY TO STATE INTEGRATION: POLITICAL
TRANSFORMATION OF HUNZA UNDER MIR JAMAL KHAN**

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the political evolution of the princely state of Hunza under the leadership of its last sovereign, Mir Jamal Khan, with particular attention to the state's accession to Pakistan in 1947 and the subsequent collapse of its princely power in 1974, and factors leading to the merger of Hunza State. Situated in the geopolitically sensitive region of Gilgit-Baltistan Hunza enjoyed a semi-autonomous status under British suzerainty prior to the division of British India. The political transition of Hunza from a princely state to its eventual merger with Pakistan has received limited scholarly attention, particularly with regard to the role of Mir Jamal Khan during this critical period. Despite being a significant historical juncture, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis on how local leadership negotiated, responded to, and influenced the accession process. This gap makes it essential to study the unique administrative, political and cultural implications of Hunza's merger. The present research is based on primary and secondary sources, including archival materials and first hand interviews. The present researcher's key informants include Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan, son of the last Mir of Hunza Mir Jamal Khan, and Rani Atiqa Sahiba, the last queen of Hunza and wife of Mir

Ghazanfar Ali Khan. The merger brought administrative and political changes, yet the Mir's family continued to hold symbolic and social authority post accession.

Keywords: *Hunza, Hunza State, Partition of 1947, Mir Jamal Khan, Accession, Dissolution, Princely states*

1. Introduction

In South Asian political history, the princely state of Hunza, which lies hidden away in the mountainous region of Gilgit-Baltistan, has a special place. Given its advantageous location along historic trade routes and its semi-autonomous status under British suzerainty, (Iqbal, 2017) Hunza, which was ruled for centuries by hereditary rulers known as Mirs, managed to preserve its unique identity (Raza, 2006). Mir Jamal Khan, the Mir of Hunza, chose to join the newly established state of Pakistan following the 1947 division of British India. The traditional power of the Mir remained under Pakistani supervision for almost thirty years after this accession, which signaled the start of a slow but intricate political transition (Baloch, 2004).

Mir Jamal Khan was the well-known Ismaili Thum or ruler of the charming Hunza valley, which is located in Pakistan's most distant northern region and shares borders with China and Russia. The date of Mir Jamal Khan's birth was September 23, 1912. At the age of 33, he succeeded his father, Mir Ghazan Khan, C.B.E., in April 1945 after receiving his education primarily at home in Gilgit (Tajddin, 2003).

Hunza went through a period of transition from 1947 and 1974, during which time princely power coexisted with changing federal governance. Centuries of dynasty control came to an end when Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's administrative reforms in 1974 officially revoked Hunza's royal status. This article examines Hunza's political development during this pivotal time, including the last Mir's function, the accession procedure, and the ultimate breakdown of princely power. It also looks at how these incidents affected identity, local government, and Hunza's assimilation into the larger Pakistani

political system. Mir Jamal Khan was exceedingly kind, friendly, understanding, and sympathetic to the underprivileged. He himself made multiple trips to the West and graciously entertained Western visitors, which helped Hunza and himself gain recognition in the West (Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022).

2. Literature Review

Tareekh-e-Ehad-e-AteeqRiyasat e Hunza (Persian Book), (Baig, 1980), by Haji Qudratullah Baig, was a Gilgit-Baltistan intellectual who authored the landmark historical work *Tareekh-e-Ehad-e-AteeqRiyasat e Hunza*. The 1980 book, which focuses on the social, cultural, tribal, and dynastic facets of the state, is widely regarded as one of the earliest indigenous attempts to document the state's pre-modern and early modern history.

Jinnah Papers, The states: Historical and Policy Perspectives and Accession to Pakistan (Zaidi, 2003), these Jinnah Papers served as a useful source for writing about this event. On November 3, 1947, M. Jamal Khan stated to Quaid-i-Azam, the Governor General of Pakistan, that he and his state, Hunza, had joined Pakistan. With Mountbatten's help, these files provided new historical evidence of India's manipulation of state accession both before and after independence.

A Princely Affair: The Accession and Integration of the Princely States of Pakistan 1947-1955 (Bangash, 2015) by Yaqoob Bangash, A comprehensive analysis of significant princely states, including Bahawalpur, Kalat, Khairpur, Swat, Hunza, and others, was included in the book. *Dabistan e Hunza: An Ajamaali Encyclopedia* (Baig, Mehmood and Baig, 2022), by Ghulam Rasool Baigh, Dr. Shahid Mehmood and Ghulam Qadir Baig, *Dabistan-e-Hunza: An Ajmaali Encyclopedia* is a significant reference and cultural preservation work that attempts to document, honor, and arrange the Hunza Valley's socio-cultural, historical, and intellectual heritage.

Diverse and Adventurous History of Hunza (Iqbal, 2017), Zafar Iqbal's book *Diverse and Adventurous History of Hunza* provides a thorough and incredibly detailed description of the political, cultural, and historical development of the Hunza Valley. Hunza's crucial location along the Silk Road, its tribal dynamics, its interactions with British colonial forces, and its significance in defining the geopolitical boundaries of South and Central Asia are all explored in this book.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology, relying primarily on interview-based data, archival records and microfilmed documents. The present researcher conducted extensive fieldwork in Hunza from 2017-2024, engaging directly with the region's cultural and political context. In depth, interviews were conducted with members of the royal family, including Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Rani Atiqa Ghazanfar (the last queen of Hunza), providing a valuable oral histories and personal insights into the transition period under Mir Jamal Khan. To supplement firsthand accounts, the researcher frequently accessed key archival repositories such as the National Archives of Pakistan, Islamabad, National Documentation Wing, Pak Secretariat Islamabad and Peshawar Archives. These sources contributed significantly to a comprehensive understanding of the political dynamics surrounding Hunza's accession and the subsequent integration into Pakistan's state.

4. The Geography and Historical Evolution of the Hunza State

The mysterious Asian country of Hunza is known for its breathtaking scenery and fascinating culture. Tourists refer to it as their paradise. It has a lot of undiscovered attractions (Baloch, 2004). Hunza is bordered as ;the districts of Nagar and Shigar to the south, Ghizer district to the west, China to the north and east, and Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor to the northwest all about Hunza. Hunza is a valley that borders China and is located in Gilgit-Baltistan's northeastern section. In the past, Hunza was a princely state and a crucial location for trade routes that passed through the Karakoram Mountains. More than 50 peaks over 7000 meters in elevation and five of the highest peaks over 8,000 meters may be found in Gilgit-Baltistan. The two primary bases of operations for trips to the mountains are Skardu and Gilgit. The Hindu Kush, western Himalayas, and Karakoram are the principal ranges(Iqbal, 2017)

The origin of the Hunzukuts is the subject of an intriguing mythology. They are thought to be descended from three Alexander the Great soldiers (Baig, Personal Communication, 2025), who married Persian women. Alexander campaigned along the Oxus with the women in tow. The three couples continued through the Wakhan as the Greek conqueror turned south. They settled in this amazing valley after discovering it. While acknowledging that the Hunza people are unique and have no better explanation for their stay in this mid-Asian paradise, scholars dismiss this story as mere folklore (Baloch, 2004).

The residents of central Hunza generally believe that the Burusho people's forefathers left Macedonia with Alexander the Great, and that some of them were compelled to leave the area around the Oxus River because of illness or another contagious disease. Few of them made it to Hunza and settled there, while others continued toward Northern Afghanistan, where the barbaric tribes killed the defenseless Macedonian migrants (Iqbal 2017)

From the perspective of the Hunza kings, the fall of Shiri Biddat is linked to yet another mythology. As previously said, AzurJamshed assassinated Shiri Biddat, wed his lovely daughter, and established the Trakhane dynasty. His brother, who had two sons, had arrived with him. One of them rose to become the ruler of Nagar, and the other of Hunza. Thus, the family of that Persian prince Azur Jamshed is the ancestry of the current kings of Hunza and Nagar (Baig, 1978).

There were four different periods in the history of the princely state of Hunza. Mir Safdar Khan, the last independent monarch who reigned from 1886 to 1891, left when the first ended. The second phase began in 1892 when Safdar Khan's younger brother, Nazim Khan, was nominated by the British. The third phase began with the independence of Pakistan. The final stage ended in 1974 when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto dismantled the princely state of Hunza (Dani, 2001).

The Mir family, who had ruled Hunza since the 17th century, had direct control over the nation until 1974 (Iqbal, 2017). In the late 19th century, the British Empire placed a lot of emphasis on the Great Game, a geopolitical struggle for dominance in Central Asia between the Russian and British Empires. In November 1891, Colonel Algernon Durand, the British Political Agent in Gilgit, led the British in launching a military campaign. The goal of the campaign was to bring the states under British suzerainty by subduing Hunza and Nagar. Russia delivered a large amount of ammunition, supplies, and fighting equipment to the Hunza delegation. Mir Safdar Ali Khan received a present from Russia. But the border guard of the Chinese government arrested them both and confiscated their belongings. Recognizing Mir Safdar's efforts to acquire Russian weapons, the British agent in Gilgit intensified his efforts to take control of Hunza and Nagar through military action.

Mir of Hunza Safdar Ali Khan of Hunza and Azar Khan of Nagar, who had previously been enemies, joined forces to fight for their nations' independence from British domination (Iqbal, 2017). Mir Safdar Khan, who never intended to go, sent his brother to join the British army, but talks did not work out (Schomberg, 1935). Mir Nazim Khan was established in Hunza by the British administration and ruled from 1939 to 1945 (Baig, Personal Communication, April 28, 2025). Mir Jamal Khan (NDW, 1945, Accession # 3908)¹, succeeded Mir Ghazan Khan II as the Mir of Hunza (NDW, 1945, Catalogue no. R/2/1086/311, Accession # 3908). In an effort to convince the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir to submit to Pakistani control, he visited Kashmir in 1947. In October 1947, he and the Ismaili people of Hunza state proclaimed their intention to join Pakistan (Tajdin, Ali and Ali, 2003).

There are four ethno-linguistic groups that make up the Hunza population. Wakhi farmers, who speak an Eastern Iranian dialect, make up the majority of the population in the upper Hunza Valley (19.2% of the Hunzukuts). They arrived in Hunza as late immigrants from the Afghan Wakhan seeking safety. The largest group in terms of population (67.1%) is the Brusho of Central Hunza. As of right now,

¹ National Documentation Wing, Cabinet Division Islamabad, Pakistan

none of the language groups can be associated with their idiom, the Brushaski. The lower regions of the Hunza Valley, known as Shinaki, are home to 12.6% of the Shina speakers; the Shina language is a Northwest Prakrit dialect. The Dom, who belong to the fourth and smallest category (1.1%), are at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale because they are mostly musicians and craftspeople. Every group in Hunza has a unique history and tradition (Kreutzmann, 1993).

5. Mir Jamal Khan: The Last Sovereign of Hunza

Muhammad Jamal Khan was the well-known Ismaili ruler of the charming valley of Hunza, which is located in the farthest northern region of Pakistan and borders China and Russia. He was also known as Major General, Hilal-e-Pakistan, Hilal-e-Juraet, and Ghazi-e-Millat. He served as the President and Personal Representative of the Imam in Central Asia. The valley is surrounded by towering intriguing mountains. On September 23, 1912, Muhammad Jamal, the Mir of Hunza and its ruler, was born. At the age of 33, he succeeded his father, Mir Ghazanfar Khan, C.B.E., in April 1945 after receiving his education primarily at home in Gilgit. The history of Hunza was written by his prolific grandfather, Sir Mir Muhammad Nazim Khan, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., who governed the country for 79 years. The Viceroy of British India at the time, Lord Curzon, visited Hunza and characterized it as the pinnacle of mountain splendor. He traveled to Kashmir in 1947 in an attempt to persuade the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir to accept Pakistan's rule. He and his Ismaili people of Hunza state declared their accession to Pakistan in October 1947. They were awarded the title of Ghazi-e-Millat for their valiant efforts in the fight for the liberation of Jammu and Kashmir (Tajddin, Ali, 2003).

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The Imam established 64 local councils in Pakistan's northern regions in 1951. The Mir of Hunza served as the Imam's personal representative in Central Asia and as president of the H.R.H. Prince Aga Khan Ismailia Supreme Council for Hunza State, Gilgit Agency, Chitral State and Central Asia. He received the Order of the Grand Officer from the Italian Government in recognition of his invaluable assistance to the 1962 Italian mountaineering expedition to K-2 Peak. This prize was intended for those who support the Italian government in its cultural endeavors (Rehmatullah, 2001).

The President of Pakistan also gave Mir Jamal Khan the honorary titles of Hilal-e-Pakistan and Hilal-e-Juraet in appreciation of his exemplary contribution to his people. He was elevated to the rank of Honorary Major General by the Pakistani government in December 1964 (Tajddin, Ali, 2003).

When his father, Mir Ghazan Khan, passed away at Gulmit, Crown Prince Jamal Khan was in Karimabad. The following day, he traveled to Gulmit. When he got to Gulmit, he gave the order to arrest anyone who was with Mir Ghazan Khan when he collapsed from the castle's upper story. Among them was Inayatuallah Baig, who was Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan's foster father before being named Wazir of Hunza. Mir Jamal Khan, however, later freed all of the prisoners without any investigation or penalties.

6. Mir Jamal Khan: Coronation and Procedure to be followed at Hunza Installation Darbar 1945

² National Documentation Wing, Cabinet Division Islamabad, Pakistan

British India's political office in Gilgit was very effective; as soon as Mir Ghazan Khan passed away, Col. Cobb, the political agent in Gilgit, proposed to the Maharaja of Kashmir and the British Resident in Srinagar that Muhammad Jamal Khan be appointed Mir of Hunza. In the interim, he made the required preparations for the coronation of the Mir of Hunza and wrote letters and suggestions to the Maharaja of Kashmir and the British Government of India. On November 23, 1945, at 10.30 a.m., the Darbar was held in the customary location—on the roof of the Mir's Fort at Baltit. By 10 a.m., all Durbaris and onlookers (except from those who were with the Political Agent) had taken their places (Iqbal, 2017).

The Political Agent was met by the Mir and the Indian Assistant at the open area directly beneath the Fort. After greeting the Mir and inspecting the Guard of Honor, which was mounted by the Gilgit Scouts, the Political Agent dismounted here. The Mir, the Commandant Officers, the Indian assistant, and the Gushpurs then went to the Durbar Hall on the Fort's roof, where the Assistant Political Agent, Gilgit, and the Indian Assistant showed them to their seats. They were presented guard of honor. After that, the Political Agent gave a brief speech. The English Kharita was given to him by the Assistant Political Agent when he returned (NDW, Accession # 3908).

7. Mir Jamal Khan and Accession of Hunza State to Pakistan

Mir Jamal Khan strengthened his authority over Hunza State after ascending to the Hunza throne. As a young Hunza ruler, he was eager to extend his authority and cultivate positive relations with the surrounding nations, particularly with the British agent in Gilgit. Pakistan was carved out a year after Mir Mohammad Jamal Khan was crowned Mir of Hunza, and he announced the unconditional accession of his state to Pakistan. He was instrumental in the development of ties between China and the British Council General in Kashgar as the head of the state of Hunza. As a result of his efforts, every Muslim employee carrying out their responsibilities at the British Council General Kashgar's office vowed allegiance to Pakistan.

Following Gilgit Baltistan's proclamation of independence and the imprisonment of Ghansara Singh, the Sikh governor of Gilgit, Muhammad Alam Khan was designated as Gilgit's political agent (Iqbal, 2017).

Gilgit-Baltistan was administered by the Maharaja of Kashmir after the Quaid-e-Azam-led independence struggle was victorious and Pakistan was established. In Gilgit, the independence movement was underway. Governor Ghansara Singh's administration was committed to putting an end to this movement, but with the help of Gilgit officers in the Indian Army and Gilgit Scout soldiers, a rebellion was organized in Gilgit, Ghansara Singh was taken into custody, and independence was proclaimed. On Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah Aga Khan III's orders, Mir of Hunza Jamal Khan proclaimed the state of Hunza's accession to Pakistan and notified the Quaid-e-Azam by telegram, while many other regions were still under siege. The fact that the Mir of Hunza also wrote to Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah to tell him of Pakistan's admission shows that Imam AaliMuqam had previously given his approval prior to August 14, 1947. Mir Nagar is reported to have announced the state of Nagar's accession to Pakistan, just like the Mir of Hunza.

The state was controlled for twenty-nine (29) years by the last ruler, Mir Jamal Khan. Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan said in 1974 that his hereditary emirate would be abolished; now, it is a district of Gilgit-Baltistan. Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan was a knowledge-lover who was also extremely modest, gregarious, liberal-minded, and pro-poor. He and his family were accepted in the Western world since he himself traveled there frequently and willingly accommodated Western tourists. He received the Ghazi-e-Millat, Hilal-e-Pakistan, and (Honorary) Major General awards with honors from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022).

Mir Jamal Khan built a cordial relationship with the Political Agent and kept him updated on political developments in Wakhan and China across the border. As a result, several reports and

correspondences were sent back and forth. Copies of Mir Mohammad Jamal Khan's correspondence are included in the appendix. The residents of Xingjaing, who were unhappy with the communist revolution in China and Xingjaing, were first willing to beg the Mir of Hunza to accede to Pakistan. The rebellion at the city of Illiy in Xingjian 60% was mentioned in a letter sent to Sardar Muhammad Alam Khan, the Political Agent of Gilgit, on September 3, 1948.

Mir Jamal Khan had a strong sense of loyalty to Pakistan, which had just gained its independence. Colonel A.S.B. was informed by Political Agent Gilgit that the Chinese Government sent a delegation to Hunza and convinced the Mir of Hunza to join China instead of Pakistan (Shah Joint Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations Karachi 607 Vid D.O. No. 69/48 Dated 17th August 1948) (NDW, 2025, Accession # 3710).

The Muslim employees of the British Consulate General Kashgar were anxious when they heard a rumor that the Mir of Hunza was thinking of annexing the state of Hunza with China, shortly after India was divided and Pakistan gained its independence. The foreign office in Karachi was notified telegraphically by the staff. Col. S.B. Shah, Joint Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led the Foreign Office. As a result, he requested a report from the Political Resident of NWFP and, in turn, from the Political Agent Gilgit via secret 963/S dated August 23, 1948.608 Nevertheless, it was determined following a thorough inquiry and correspondence that the information was based on an inaccurate intelligence report and a rumor directed at the Mir of Hunza. General Chao met with the Mir of Hunza in Mintaka, which is close to the Chinese border. The Chinese group returned to Kashgar following in-depth discussions (Iqbal, 2017).

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the prime minister, declared that Pakistan was the land of the workers and peasants, not the Jagirdars, Sardars, and Mirs. "We cannot tolerate states within states," he declared. "All states have already been abolished," he remarked. There was just one remaining, and Hunza State

has now been eliminated as well (Zaidi, 1973). He stated that this decision was made on the basis of principles and was not intended to target any one person. When the announcement was made, hundreds of attendees at the Iftar gathering cheered and chanted *AwamiHakoomatZindabad* (Dawn, 2024).

8.The Partition of British India and Strategic Importance of Hunza

With the establishment of the Union of India and the Dominion of Pakistan as the successor republics to British India, British authority over the Indian subcontinent came to an end in 1947. The 562 Indian princely states were no longer under British rule. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 states that any treaties and agreements between His Majesty and the rulers of Indian States that were in effect on the date of the Act's passage expire along with His Majesty's suzerainty over the Indian States. After that, 75 States were given the option to stay independent or join Pakistan or India. The Maharaja fired his independence-minded Prime Minister Ram Chandra Kak on August 11. Scholars and observers see this move as a step toward India's admission. In order to avoid this danger, Pakistanis made the decision in 1978 to reclaim Kashmir by force if necessary (Iqbal, 2017). The 1947 division of British India had a profound effect on the strategic geography of far-flung princely realms like Hunza in addition to changing the political climate of South Asia. Situated at the meeting point of the Pamir, Hindu Kush, and Karakoram mountain ranges, Hunza was strategically significant because of its closeness to China, Afghanistan, and the former Soviet Union. As a buffer zone and entry point for northern trade lines, this area became very significant for Pakistan during the Cold War. The strategic location of the Hunza State became crucial to regional security strategies after it joined Pakistan in late 1947. This was particularly true with the building of the Karakoram Highway in the 1960s and 1970s, which connected Pakistan and China via the Khunjerab Pass. Due to its strategic location close to the divisive Kashmir area, Hunza was also vital in border diplomacy and defense. As a result, the division

not only signaled a shift in power but also turned Hunza from a remote mountain kingdom into a very strategically and geopolitically significant area (Ian, 1991).

9. Hunza State's Accession to Pakistan over China

Despite growing pressure from the Chinese government, the Mir of Hunza indicated in an annexation letter dated October 1948 that the Hunza State will be annexed by Pakistan, shortly after Pakistan was established and Gilgit Baltistan gained its independence. The Mir of Hunza was given respite and concessions during a special meeting at Mintaka Pass, where he was also under pressure to declare the state of Hunza a part of China. Despite being a separate kingdom, Kanjut maintained cordial ties with the Chinese Empire, and over the sixth and seventh centuries, China frequently ruled over all of Gilgit Baltistan, including the kingdom of Kanjut. The Chinese Empire was frequently honored by the state of Hunza. Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan diplomatically evaded and rejected the Chinese offer to annex the Kanjut with China despite the pressure and several concessions made by the Chinese government. Instead, he declared the unconditional annexation of the State of Hunza with Pakistan. The Mir of Hunza's honesty and sincerity toward Pakistan were demonstrated by this deed. Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan provided suggestions and tangible proof on the political evolution in Xingjaing, China. Mir Jamal Khan was a well-liked leader of the state of Hunza. Because of his modest demeanor, the state's citizens have been incredibly loyal and devoted to him since his coronation. He was a politician who built cordial ties with both foreign nations and the Pakistani government's bureaucrats. His close friend, Field Marshall Muhammad Ayub Khan, the President of Pakistan, came to Hunza in 1961 at the Mir of Hunza's personal invitation. The Gojal people were incredibly naïve and uncomplicated. The President of Pakistan requested the people to submit their demands through the Mir of Hunza while he was visiting Gojal Field Marshall Muhammad Ayub Khan. In order for the proposal to be presented to the President of Pakistan, Mir of Hunza requested that the prominent members of the region confer and submit their unified desire. The inhabitants of Gojal may have been impoverished or

simple, yet after careful deliberation, they asked to be given ten mounds of rock salt, which was seen as a boon. The Mir of Hunza dutifully forwarded the request.

President Muhammad Ayub Khan of Pakistan and Prime Minister Chien Lai of China were among the powerful friends of Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan. He could have worked to advance the growth of his people and state by utilizing these contacts (Iqbal, 2017).

10. The Factors leading to Merger of the State of Hunza)

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto announced the dissolution of Hunza State in 1974. It is believed that poverty led to restlessness and discontent. In the absence of adequate resources, the people of Hunza faced many problems. They received harsh treatment. For example, under the reign of Ayasho II, the people were compelled to flee or transfer to China because of his oppressive rule. At times over the history of Hunza State, this continuous movement was evident. (Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022).

Despite having personal ties to both Pakistan's president, Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan, and the governor of West Pakistan, Nawab Amir Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh, others contended that Mir Jamal Khan did not recommend any sensible or long-term changes to those officials that would assist Hunza.

Mir was concerned that the state's attempts to make education universal would undermine his power. It should be mentioned that Sir Aga Khan III was highly motivated to see Hunza's educational system flourish. In 1946, he authorized a substantial funding of sixteen thousand rupees per year to build Diamond Jubilee Schools in Hunza and Ghazar. Nonetheless, informed and well-informed people believed that discrimination was occasionally applied in certain cases, leading to subpar handling. The protesters argue that in order to change the situation for the people of Hunza, an educated Mir Jamal Khan should be able to make a choice and carry it out (Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022).

The unemployment rate in Hunza was increasing every day. Due to a shortage of resources, many were compelled to leave their homes in order to find employment outside the state. During their battle, they had to face many challenges to find work.

People were unhappy, according to the protesters, because education was being seriously neglected. Since 1946, Maulana Hazir Imam has been involved in the establishment of a dormitory in Gilgit. Unfortunately, although the hostel is meant for all Ismailis, it is only accessible to Nazim's close friends and family. The aforementioned hostel does not have any admittance restrictions. Only a direct or indirect connection to the Mir is required for entry. As a result, when His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan visited Gilgit in 1960, the students often claimed that the rooms of Jamaat Khana Boarding (Boys) were inspected. Non-standard bread that was made in the hotel was the subject of a complaint from several boarding school pupils to Su Bidar Safiullah Baig. Subedar Sahib encouraged the students to praise God for their blessing as the children of poor parents after he had eaten the bread himself. Focus on your studies and show that you are a bright and talented national child. Use your education to support your parents and the nation. ("Ajmaali Encyclopedia", 2022)

Prior to independence, Hunza had a single, tiny, and unreliable hospital serving the whole population. Since drugs and injections were not accessible, many patients were not treated, and the hospital in question is also under-equipped. Patients were often counseled by doctors to purchase drugs on the open market. The protesters told Mir that there is only one hospital in Aliabad, Hunza, and that there is a shortage of staff and drugs; as a result, this issue needs to be resolved. In addition, there were reports of youth unemployment. When these complaints went unresolved, many Hunzais in Karachi became disillusioned and founded the Hunza Development Institute ((Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022).

Those who traveled to Karachi for job and study decided to alternate embraces once the lights of awareness awakened their sleepy consciousness and awareness. They were determined to turn Hunza

into a thriving, bright valley. They planned to highlight their viewpoint via the media, other sources, and strength to inform the Hunza state leadership that they are not causing the current state flooding. They asserted that the primary problem was that advancements in justice, development, and education had been hindered by the state's personal authority. The people of the state were deprived of timely and affordable justice (Baig, Personal Communication April 28, 2025).

The State of Hunza experienced severe starvation almost every year, particularly between March and June. Due to the rapid population growth and extensive land fragmentation, many locals found it difficult to survive and started eating grass. The government has not yet taken any steps to ensure the food supply in Hunza. Wheat from Gilgit can be bought at outrageous prices of between Rs. 60 and Rs. 70 per mound by those who have family members who earn extra money; when transportation costs are taken into account, the ultimate cost rises to at least Rs. 80 per mound. Furthermore, essentials like cotton, tea, salt, and kerosene oil were sold at outrageous amounts.

The lack of suitable housing is one of the biggest problems the Hunza in Karachi face. Many people relocated to Karachi in search of employment, but the dearth of suitable accommodation had a negative impact on their health. As a result, convincing our community or the Pakistani government to take the necessary steps to obtain land plots for their housing needs took hours (Iqbal, 2017).

11. Civil Society of Hunza for Merger

A large number of students and working professionals in Karachi at the time intensified their efforts to convince the government of their demands and started outreach programs to decision-makers and the media. In this dire situation, several Karachi citizens thought that the ruling class backed the idea that the media shouldn't reveal our country's problems. Supporters of the breakup of Hunza State thought

that an alternative system was the only practical choice because the state had not granted its residents democratic, social, political, economic, and educational rights and was still reluctant to advance toward progress. The backwardness of the state has undoubtedly not been eliminated by this state system. He said that we must reinforce our position in tandem with the media and other sources and forces so that the Hunza State leadership realizes that we are not the straws that let the state's flood flow wherever it pleases. They asserted that the primary problem was that the road to justice, advancement, and education had been blocked by Hunza State's personal rule. To say that the Honzais in Karachi were taking advantage of the situation in the country to highlight their movement would be unnecessary.

12. Effects of National Situation

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto challenged the government, Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan's government was ousted, martial law was lifted, and the populace responded badly to the presidential elections. An anti-Pakistan Ayub Khan Movement that started in Rawalpindi Gordon College led to the fall of Ayub Khan's government. When a sizable study party of Gordon College students arrived to Landi, a dispute between customs and students near Attock led to this event. The rebellion against President Ayub Khan began at this point. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto also exploited the situation by using Ayub Khan. Consequently, General Mohammad Bachi Khan took over the administration after Ayub Khan resigned. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who favored the dissolution of the Karachi state, was someone he was able to get along well with. He went on to say that the Pakistan People's Party's agenda would prioritize the disintegration of the Gilgit-Baltistan states.

13. *Idaara-e-Hunza Taraqqi*

To raise public awareness of their democratic and human rights, press conferences and other summer events were organized using the *Idaara-e-Hunza Taraqqi* platform. This demand has come from the

Hunzai gentlemen who live in Karachi and the Mir of Hunza, as well as the Intercontinental Hotel, Metro Pool Hotel, Jabees Hotel, and Gym Khana Hotel. While those who viewed the state of Hunza as a hindrance to the advancement and development of the populace persisted in their efforts to eliminate the personal system wherever feasible, those who advocated for the disintegration of the state kept reporting on everything. A formal demand for a charter was given to Mir Jamal Khan, but the demands remained hidden under the headlines. These incidents have left the Akbarian state of Hunza clear-cut in the context of these individuals' campaigns for the dissolution of the state (Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022).

When the residents of Nagar joined the state's dissolution efforts, it marked an interesting turning point in the struggle for the dissolution of the state of Hunza. In order to coordinate their efforts, social leaders from both sides established the Huns English Liberation Movement. On September 13, 1972, at the Jabees Hotel in Karachi, Dr. Sher Zaman, Qurban Jan, Joint Secretary Amanullah Khan, General Secretary Qurban Ali (Samayer-Nagar), Convener/President Maula Madam (Baltit-Hunza), and other members of the organization were there. To be clear, the news conference was organized by the Development Huns to honor the delegation, which included the Nagar Ulema who supported the state's dissolution (“Ajmaali Encyclopedia”, 2022).

14. State Resistance

In an effort to stop the march, some Hunza state citizens began to harass the Karachi mobs' relatives in a variety of ways. They also forbade participation in these activities by the House of Representatives' Huns and Liberation Movement. Identifying the groups, apprehending them, and requesting preventative measures. Wazir Baig and Shah Zaman (late), who had been imprisoned for a crime intended to destroy Hunza State, were released by Mir of Hunza after a fierce outcry. In a different incident, Moulamedhi (Baltit) and Ghulam Muhammad (Passu-Gujal) were also tried to close, but they managed to hide.

However, the response led to their instant capture and subsequent release.

15. Standing of State Supporters

Supporters of the state thought that when Mir Jamal Khan connected the state of Hunza with Pakistan, the paper that was presented to Quaid-e-Azam said that the state would endure as long as Pakistan existed. The community won't be hidden, the state's traditions, love, and compassion will be harmed, and the justice who faces Darbar Mir in two seats won't be fortunate for decades. A large group of movement workers assembled at the Karachi Intercontinental Hotel to meet with Mir of Hunza. In his global charter of demands, Dr. Sher Zaman made important calls for the resolution of concerns related to development, education, and society. The most crucial of these objectives was the establishment of a democratic government with direct representation from knowledgeable and experienced individuals, overseen by Mir in the state. The creation of a democratic administration, supervised by Mir in the state, with direct representation from qualified and experienced people was the most important of these goals.

By removing the long-standing, traditional structure that allowed the rich and the poor to guarantee development, justice, and equitable representation for everyone while providing state kids with educational facilities in other cities around the nation, this public government creates a new democratic atmosphere. It was also said that the system should be built on the foundation of free elections.

16. Memorandum to the President of Pakistan

Idara-i-Taraqi-i-Hunza, a Karachi-based organization, wrote to then-Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on October 20, 1972 (Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022). The memorandum demanded, among other things, that the Hunza state be abolished. A Gilgitan delegation visited Eaglemount Paris about the same time. With the exception of Ghulam Muhammad Baig from Hyderabad and Dr. Sabit Rahim

from Ghizer, everyone in the room was a close acquaintance of the Mir of Hunza. Only these two individuals were able to convey the real message of His Highness the Aga Khan to the people. However, some Mir followers in Gulmit insulted and humiliated Ghulam Muhammad Baig for speaking the truth. In response to this catastrophe, the Central Asian residents of Karachi issued a brochure condemning the events in Gulmit on August 15, 1973. Additionally, the Gojal community in Karachi passed a resolution denouncing the mistreatment of Ghulam Muhammad Baig on June 23, 1973 (Baig, Mehmood, Baig, 2022).

17. Towards a Democratic Hunza: A Proposal under Mir Jamal Khan's Leadership

In 1968, members of the Hunza community residing in Karachi met with the Mir of Hunza. Under the guidance of Mr. Shah Zaman from Dorkhan, the delegation held discussions with the Mir. The delegation was made up of Mr. Shah Zaman (Delegation Leader, Dorkhan), Captain Mehboob Ali Khan (Baltit), Mr. Muhammad Shafi (Advocate, Hassanabad), Mr. Gul Muhammad (Gulmit), Dr. Sher Zaman (Dorkhan), Mr. MoulaMadad (Advocate, Baltit), Mr. Qurban Jan (Gulmit), Mr. Mirbaz Khan (Hyderabad), Mr. Sultan Ishaq (Altit), Mr. SaifullahBaig (Altit), Mr. Shafa Ali (Dorkhan), Mr. Wazir Baig (Aliabad), Mr. Arab Khan (Hassanabad), Mr. Muhammad Yaqub (Garailt), and Mr. Shakoor Ali (Garailt). Mr. Amanullah Khan (Garailt), Mr. Dinar Shah (Chipursan), Mr. HunarBaig (Passu), Mr. Muhammad Qazi (Passu), Mr. Mutabiat Shah (Gulmit), and Mr. Ghulam Muhammad (Passu).

At the Inter-Continental Hotel in Karachi, the Mir of Hunza met in detail with a group of members of the Hunza community. Discussions centered on proposals to reorganize the governing system according to a predetermined process. The delegation respectfully suggested that all branches of government continue to report to the Mir of Hunza, who would remain the head of state and administration. They emphasized that while he would continue to get the deference he is due, traditional political structures such as Trangfah, Yarfah, and Lambardar should be gradually replaced

by an electoral system. The delegation also recommended a structured tax system where the amount of taxes collected would be based on the size of the property rather than the number of households.

They stressed that all revenue should be managed under an open system for the benefit of the general public, not the crooked individuals who surround the Mir. Unlike in the past, the Mir of Hunza listened intently to the proposal and remained emotionless. He assured the delegation that he would carefully consider the proposal. However, like before, he was duped by individuals in his close circle, who kept important reforms from being implemented. Without progress, the group started to fear that direct combat would become inevitable.

To publicly voice their demands and call attention to Hunza's oppressive and autocratic regime, a protest was organized on March 4, 1969. A day earlier, on March 3, demonstrators had assembled outside the gate of the Inter-Continental Hotel and called for a speech from the Mir of Hunza. The demonstrators were enraged and violent when the conspirators, as usual, stopped the Mir of Hunza from addressing the audience and forced him to return to the hotel. Consequently, demonstrators have damaged the hotel's entrance and glass (Iqbal, 2017).

18. Demand for Abolish of Hunza State

After all attempts at communication and reconciliation with the Mir of Hunza had failed, the only option was to publicly request that the Government of Pakistan dismantle the republics of Hunza and Nagar. The democratic forces of Gilgit-Baltistan united in support of this cause at various times. Several political groups were established to promote this cause. One such organization is the Hunza Nagar Liberation Movement, which was founded in Karachi by the people of Hunza and Nagar with the primary objective of ending the dictatorship in both states. The movement grew democratically under the leadership of advocate Moulamadad and Qurban Ali of Sumayar Nagar, holding annual elections in accordance with its statutes. sacrifices made in the struggle for democratic rights,

particularly by the people of Nagar, who were killed and wounded on April 24, 1968, while marching towards Gilgit at Chalt. These incidents are described in detail on pages 223–272 of Syed Yahya Shah's book *BrushoQabayil and Brushal*, published by North Publications in Gilgit. Another political organization, *Tehreek-e-Azadi* Gilgit Baltistan, was founded under the leadership of prominent Baltistan political activist Syed Mehdi. Collectively, these organizations spoke with Pakistani government leaders and resisted local authorities to highlight the situation in Gilgit-Baltistan. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the chairman of the Pakistan People's Party, declared that there was no justification for princely kingdoms to stay in Pakistan and vowed to abolish them as soon as he became office.

At this point, neither side was moving. On a variety of political platforms, Hunza's educated elite advocated for the states' dissolution, claiming that maintaining them as distinct entities inside Pakistan was irrational. The people of Gilgit-Baltistan, trapped in a feudal system, endured enormous taxes without access to benefits or growth. The idea of deconstructing these princely realms was welcomed since it offered relief from heavy taxes and the chance for growth. At the time, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and the Pakistan People's Party were the only chance for the people of Hunza (Iqbal, 2017).

19. Dissolution of Hunza State

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto kept his promise to abolish the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) when he announced the dissolution of Nagar State in 1972. He declared Hunza State abolished and gave it the designation of AD (Additional District) on September 25, 1974. Raja Ghazi Johar was the first Additional Deputy Commissioner. The people of Hunza, especially the Mir, nobility, and sympathizers, reacted forcefully to the news that the state was to be dissolved. The people welcomed the presence of the Home Minister and the state affairs supervisor, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan Hunza, on September 18, 1973. The people of the state also promised to sacrifice all for the integrity and

progress of Pakistan ("AjmaaliEncyclopdia", 2022).

Hunza state and the Northern Areas would merge, according to Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Mr. Bhutto said that Pakistan was not the property of Jagirdars, Sardars, or Mirs, but of workers and

peasants. "We cannot tolerate states within states," he said. "All states have already been abolished," he said. Only one remained, and now Hunza State has also been wiped off. "This decision was made based on principles and was not meant to target any one person," he said. Hundreds of people at the Iftar gathering rejoiced and sang "*AwamiHakoomatZindabad*" when the announcement was made (Dawn, 2024).

Rani Atiqa (daughter-in-law of last Mir of Hunza, Mir Jamal Khan and wife of Mir Ghazanfar Khan) last queen of Hunza State shared that the disintegration of the Hunza Empire caused great sadness among the people of Hunza. The inhabitants had congregated in Karimabad in protest, she explained, in contrast to the official story that people poured into the streets in jubilation. The people were mourning the loss of a system that had provided them with stability and contentment; they were neither happy nor relieved. Many people in Hunza still express a wish to go back to the old system of government because they think it was more efficient and more accessible to the populace. The difficulties people encounter in obtaining justice were brought to light by Rani Atiqa. For even small legal issues, they must go all the way to Islamabad just to find that the judge is on leave. Many still turn to the former royal family for resolution after going through such hardship and making numerous trips; she claims that they make an effort to provide prompt, equitable decisions right away (Rani Atiqa, Personal Communication, 2023).

20. Democratic Structure

In 1975, Hunza was represented on the Northern Area Council by Lieutenant Colonel (Honorary) Ayash Khan. In 1979, 1983, 1987, and 1991, Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan, the son of Mir Jamal Khan, represented Hunza. Mr. Nazar, the victor of Mount Affairs, was appointed by Mount Nazar in the October 1994 election. Mir Ghazanfar Ali won the 2004 elections, Mr. Wazir Baig won the 1999 election, and Rani Atiqa Ghazanfar was appointed as one of the female members. In the 2013 election, Mir Sulim Khan (son of Ghazanfar Khan) Hunza was elected to the women's seat, which had previously been held by Rani Atiqa Ghazanfar.

The Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2018 states that after the 2013 elections, the federal government appointed Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan as the governor, Raja Jalal Hussain as the governor, and Hafiz-ur-Rehman as the chief minister of Gilgit-Baltistan. The overwhelming majority of people in Gilgit-Baltistan supported giving them the same humanitarian and democratic rights as people in other regions of the country. They believe that the Kashmir issue does not interest the country or the people of Gilgit-Baltistan.

21. Conclusion

A centuries-old monarchical system came to an end in 1974 with Hunza's accession to Pakistan and the subsequent breakup of its princely power, ushering in a new era in the region's political and administrative history. This shift was not sudden; rather, it was the consequence of changing regional politics, national goals, and the Hunza people's increasing demands for representation and integration. Inside Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan, Hunza preserved internal autonomy while initially remaining a semi-autonomous princely state inside Pakistan's administrative framework. Princely states were abolished nationwide as a result of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's centralized federal government policies and the larger goal of uniting all of Pakistan under a single constitutional framework. The process of Hunza's princely authority breakdown was intricate and included significant changes to sociopolitical power structures in addition to administrative adjustments. Some saw it as a

move toward democratic empowerment and egalitarian development, while others saw it as a loss of traditional identity. Since the final Mir favored cooperation and dialogue above resistance, his contribution to a smooth transition and preserving political stability cannot be understated. The preservation of Hunza's historical identity and its incorporation into contemporary Pakistan are both entwined with his legacy.

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