

Pak. finalises Bill to grant new status to Gilgit-Baltistan: report

India opposed to any change in 'illegally occupied territories'

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Pakistani authorities have finalised a law to award provisional provincial status to strategically located Gilgit-Baltistan, a media report said on Sunday.

India has clearly conveyed to Pakistan that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including the areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, are an integral part of the country by virtue of its fully legal and irrevocable accession.

India maintains the Government of Pakistan or its

judiciary has no locus standi on territories illegally and forcibly occupied by it.

Dawn newspaper reported that under the proposed law by the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Supreme Appellate Court (SAC) of Gilgit-Baltistan may be abolished and the region's election commission is likely to be merged with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Sources in the Law Ministry told the newspaper that the draft of the Bill titled '26th Constitutional Amendment Bill' had been pre-

pared and submitted to Prime Minister Imran Khan.

According to the sources, the draft Bill has been prepared after careful reading of the Constitution of Pakistan, international laws, the UN resolutions especially those related to a plebiscite on Kashmir, comparative constitutional laws and local legislation.

The stakeholders, including the governments of Gilgit-Baltistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, had been consulted on the proposed constitutional amendment, the report quoted sources.