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GB CM Praises AKDN's Role in Regional Development

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Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan lauds the Aga Khan Development Network's contributions to education, healthcare, and disaster resilience in a recent meeting with its leaders.

On August 6, 2025, Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Haji Gulbar Khan met with key leaders of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Islamabad, including Nizar Mewawalla, President of the Ismaili Council for Pakistan, Aziz Boolani, Chief Executive Officer of Serena Hotels, and Akhtar Iqbal, Chief Executive Officer of the Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan. The meeting focused on the AKDN's significant contributions to the region's development, as reported by the Islamabad Post. Khan praised the network's longstanding efforts in critical sectors such as education, healthcare, disaster risk

reduction, climate resilience, and civil society engagement, which have bolstered Gilgit-Baltistan's socio-economic framework.

Khan highlighted the AKDN's role in improving access to quality education and healthcare, particularly in remote areas where infrastructure remains limited. He noted that initiatives like the Aga Khan Education Services have enhanced literacy rates, with female literacy in GB reaching 61%, according to government data cited by the Express Tribune. The Chief Minister also acknowledged the AKDN's disaster preparedness programs, which have been vital in a region prone to floods and glacial lake outbursts, as evidenced by recent climate challenges outlined on the official Gilgit-Baltistan government website. Khan emphasized the importance of continued collaboration to address these vulnerabilities.

The meeting also addressed the recent floods that devastated parts of Gilgit-Baltistan. Khan had previously sent a formal letter to His Highness the Aga Khan, requesting assistance for affected communities, as per the Islamabad Post. Nizar Mewawalla, speaking on behalf of the AKDN, expressed condolences for flood victims and assured ongoing support to build community resilience, reinforcing the network's commitment to the region's recovery. This aligns with the AKDN's history of providing relief during natural disasters, as noted in their partnership with local authorities.

Khan's administration views the AKDN as a key partner in tackling Gilgit-Baltistan's challenges, from unemployment to environmental threats. The meeting underscores a shared commitment to sustainable development, with Khan calling for deeper cooperation to ensure resources benefit the region's 1.5 million residents, per 2023 census data. This partnership aims to strengthen Gilgit-Baltistan's path to prosperity amid pressing economic and climatic pressures.