



The Paleogene of Azad Kashmir, Hazara Kashmir Syntaxis, Pakistan

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The Paleogene sedimentary succession of Azad Kashmir forms the component of the western limb of Hazara-Kashmir Syntaxis, northern Pakistan. It is the northernmost extremity of the Lesser Himalayan geology. The town Balakot which is a gateway to the Higher Himalayan geology is at its tip. The Paleogene succession of Azad Kashmir consists of the Upper Paleocene (Thanetian) Lockhart Limestone, Patala Formation, the Lower Eocene (Ypresian) Margala Hill Limestone, Chor Gali Formation and the Middle Eocene (Lutetian) Kuldana Formation. The sequence unconformably overlies the Cambrian Abbottabad Formation (Sirban Dolomite Member) and likewise overlain by the Miocene Murree Formation. Foraminiferal biostratigraphy and the microfacies analysis of the Upper Paleocene Lockhart Limestone, Patala Formation and the Lower Eocene Margala Hill Limestone and the Chor Gali Formation is the first comprehensive study of its kind from Azad Kashmir. Stratigraphically important benthonic larger foraminifera have been encountered which belong to the genera. Lockhartia, Miscellanea, Actinosiphon, Operculina, Assilina, Ranikothalia and Nummulites. Most common microfacies are the bioclastic wackestone and the packstone whereby the bioclast are the larger foraminifera. The association of the larger foraminifera and the microfacies are indicative of shallow shelf(inner neritic) marine environments The absence of Discocyclinids and the Alveolinids is peculiar in contrast to their occurrence in the Pakistan stratigraphy.