

## India, Pakistan set for composite dialogue Monday

India and Pakistan will launch the fifth round of Composite Dialogue by discussing Jammu and Kashmir and security Monday, coinciding with a special parliament session that will decide the fate of the government here.

Ahead of the talks, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Salman Bashir, who flew in here from Amritsar after crossing over through the land transit route at Wagah-Attari, set a positive tone for the talks, saying he was expecting 'good results' from the foreign secretary-level meeting.

'I have come here for the talks and I am hoping of good results from this meeting. Both India and Pakistan want peaceful atmosphere,' Bashir told reporters at Wagah-Attari checkpost. He stressed that trade and the release of prisoners detained in each other's territory will figure prominently in his discussions with his Indian counterpart Shivshankar Menon Monday.

'I have come to India to hold talk with my Indian counterpart on the issues of peace and security of both the neighbouring nations, including Jammu and Kashmir,' he said.

Bashir met the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) prime ministerial hopeful L.K. Advani at his residence here in an attempt to build bridges with India's chief opposition party.

Pakistan has played up the trade card amid suspicions by [New Delhi](#) that the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was allegedly involved in the July 7 suicide attack on the Indian mission in Kabul, which killed four Indians, including a diplomat and a military attache of brigadier rank.

Menon will raise India's concerns about the suspected involvement of ISI in the car bomb attack on the Indian mission in Kabul, official sources said here. Islamabad has denied any role in the deadly blasts that also killed 54 Afghans in the first major attack on Indian assets abroad.

Last week, a team from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cancelled its meeting with Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), set for July-end, to underscore its concerns at the alleged flow of terrorism from across the border.

The visit was cancelled days after National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan said that New Delhi had 'pretty good evidence' of ISI's suspected involvement in the car bomb attack on the Indian mission.

The attack, coming as it did barely a month after Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi came here and spoke about fighting terrorism jointly, has created a discordant note in the midst of positive vibes emanating from the five-month-old civilian leadership in Pakistan.

However, both sides have decided to keep their over four-year-old peace process on course.

Pakistan is keen to focus on expanding bilateral trade with India by allowing more imports from the neighbouring country, including diesel and fuel oil, Pakistan's Commerce Minister Ahmed Mukhtar said while announcing the new trade policy in Islamabad Friday.

'We are gradually liberalising our bilateral trade with India,' he said, while adding that Pakistan was

expanding its import list from India to include diesel, fuel oil and other items.

'It will be cheaper (to import from India) due to differences in transportation cost. This will also help us to address our global trade deficit,' he said, signalling a significant shift of policy on part of Pakistan.

Indicating that his government was ready to embrace foreign direct investment (FDI) from India, Mukhtar said a decision had been taken that if 'Indian manufacturers of CNG buses made a firm commitment to establish manufacturing of such buses in Pakistan,' his ministry might allow the import of 10 buses by road via Wagah 'from each possible investor as test consignments'.

Asif Ali Zardari, the co-chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) that leads the ruling coalition, has shown an interest in the participation of Indian companies in the joint production of power with Pakistan.

Bilateral trade is estimated to be over \$1 billion. But unofficial trade is estimated to be at least double or treble the amount.

A joint working group met in Islamabad Thursday and held discussions on a slew of confidence-building measures aimed at boosting trade and transport across the Line of Control dividing Kashmir.

These included working out modalities for increasing the frequency of the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar and Rawalkot-Poonch bus services from a fortnightly basis to a weekly basis and the launch of intra-Kashmir trade and truck services.

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