

India, Pakistan begin fifth round of dialogue

Taking their peace process forward, India and Pakistan Monday began their fifth round of composite dialogue here to discuss issues like Jammu and Kashmir and terrorism.

The talks take place amid a special parliament session here that could decide the fate of the ruling coalition in India.

Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon began daylong talks with his Pakistani counterpart Salman Bashir on Jammu and Kashmir and security - the first two talking points in the eight-item composite dialogue that also includes disputes over Siachen glacier, Sir Creek, trade and culture.

The two officials will also discuss steps to implement cross-border trade and transportation links to boost confidence along the Line of Control.

Besides Menon, the Indian delegation comprised Satyabrata Pal, India's high commissioner to Pakistan, T.C.A Raghavan, joint secretary in charge of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran in the foreign office and other senior officials.

The Pakistani delegation, headed by Bashir, included Pakistan's High Commissioner to India Shahid Malik and director general (South Asia and Saarc) in the foreign office in Islamabad Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry.

Menon will raise India's concerns about the suspected involvement of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in the car bomb attack on the Indian mission in Kabul on July 7.

Islamabad has denied any role in the deadly blasts that also killed 54 Afghans in the first major attack on an Indian mission.

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