

No talks between Indian, Pakistani foreign ministers at CHOGM

The Indian and Pakistani foreign ministers were in this Trinidad and Tobago capital to attend the Commonwealth summit, but did not meet for talks as expected as the Indian side felt that Islamabad had done little to address its concerns.

Indian External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna and his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mehmood Qureshi were here to attend the foreign ministers meeting of the Commonwealth countries Nov 25-26.

Qureshi is also representing Pakistan at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Earlier, either Pakistan's Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani or President Asif Ali Zardari were expected to attend but presumably stayed away due to the worrying domestic situation.

With India making it clear that Pakistan needs to do more to punish the perpetrators of the [Mumbai](#) attacks a year ago and dismantle the 'sanctuaries' for terrorists, there was little hope of any attempt at diplomatic contact to resume the stalled dialogue that Pakistan wants.

'Pakistan has done little to address our concerns. There is little to be achieved by another meeting,' official sources said. There was no official word on why the talks were not held.

Four days ago, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said in Washington that his government will not rest till the perpetrators of the Mumbai terrorist attacks were brought to justice and asked Pakistan to dismantle the terror infrastructure and all safe havens of terrorism.

The prime minister had stressed that since the conspiracy was basically hatched in Pakistan, it was its obligation to punish the masterminds of 26/11 attacks. A total of 166 people were killed and 244 injured when 10 Pakistani terrorists sneaked into Mumbai and unleashed mayhem in the city Nov 26-28 last year.

'It's our strong feeling that the government of Pakistan can do more to bring to book the perpetrators and masterminds of the ghastly crime who move about freely in Pakistan,' Manmohan Singh said.

Venting Pakistan's frustration at the Indian response to its repeated pitch for the resumption of dialogue, Qureshi said here that Islamabad wants 'serious talks' with India and not 'photo opportunities'.

In an interview with CNN-IBN, Qureshi said India has not given enough evidence to nail Lashkar-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Saeed, the suspected mastermind of the Mumbai carnage.

'I have always welcomed a meeting but it has to be a meaningful meeting. It has to be a dialogue which has to be result oriented,' Qureshi said. '(India has) to respond, so far (India has) failed to respond. We are no longer interested in a photo opportunity,' he said.

Qureshi stressed that there was always the possibility of India and Pakistan resuming talks, but it must be 'free of conditions'.

'The possibility is there, you need political will... we have to get out of the old mindset. We have a common element... let's join hands to defeat the common element and if we miss that opportunity

then we have not served over a billion people living in the subcontinent,' he said.

Manish Chand (© IANS / India eNews)