

KASHMIR BACKS INDIA-PAK. DIALOGUE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Pakistan

Major political parties and the Hurriyat in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday expressed support for a Kashmir-centric dialogue between India and Pakistan, welcoming the intent for “constructive engagement” expressed by the former and “uninterrupted dialogue” by the latter.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, chairman of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, described Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s letter to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan and the Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi’s remarks of “uninterrupted dialogue on Kashmir” as “a positive development”. “It reflects new positivity. We hope that the channels of communication will remain open to build trust. It is in the interest of Kashmir and also in the interest of the entire region if the two countries come closer and resolve the long-pending Kashmir dispute,” he told *The Hindu*.

The Mirwaiz, who is a part of the Joint Resistance Leadership along with Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Yasin Malik, hinted at holding a meeting of various leaders over the latest engagement between India and Pakistan.

Kashmir, he said, was a complex issue, and Pakistan had rightly suggested an uninterrupted dialogue.

“The dialogue is the need of the hour. We always support any such initiatives,” he said. The Mirwaiz, however, was quick to add that India needed to show reciprocity and “change its current military approach in Kashmir to a political one”.

Good beginning: PDP

Peoples Democratic Party leader Naeem Akhtar said the two countries had made an encouraging beginning by speaking of talks.

“We hope the new government in Pakistan walks the talk and gets adequate response from this side too. Jammu and Kashmir is directly hit by the hostility between the two countries and the progress in the region is held hostage to security concerns. We expect a serious dialogue to follow up the statements,” Mr. Akhtar said.

The National Conference termed the statements of India and Pakistan “a crucial development”.

“Dialogue needs to be taken forward. All groups will appreciate it,” party general secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar said.

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