
PTI dismisses talk of direct discussions with government

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Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has categorically denied having any intentions of holding direct negotiations with the government, refuting claims of discussions with the National Assembly Speaker. Speaking to the media on Sunday, Gohar clarified the nature of PTI's interactions with the Speaker of the National Assembly. "As an opposition party, we meet with the speaker to discuss parliamentary affairs and the functioning of the assembly," he stated. "These meetings are open and are focused solely on assembly matters or opposition parliamentary issues." The PTI lawmakers said that there has never been a conversation about negotiations with the government in any of their meetings with the speaker. "At no point has any PTI member or delegation suggested negotiations with the government during our interactions with the speaker," he asserted. Gohar further clarified that the party has not offered

to revisit any negotiation proposals. “We remain steadfast in our stance of not engaging in direct talks with the government,” he concluded. In April, Gohar confirmed that PTI was not holding ‘backdoor talks’ with anyone, just a day after it was reported that the incarcerated founding party founder Imran Khan had green-lit negotiations with the establishment and political forces. He stated that the ex-premier had only sought names for holding negotiations, but no talks were being held right now. Yesterday, after a key advisory meeting of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) held under the chairmanship of Nawaz Sharif at the party secretariat in Model Town, Lahore, the ruling lot shut the door on any potential dialogue with its arch-rival PTI unless its chief Imran Khan extends a public apology for the May 9 riots. Refusing to apologise for the violence on May 9 Imran claims it is he who deserves an apology and has sought CCTV footage of the carnage. PML-N’s central secretary-general Ahsan Iqbal said negotiations were off the table until the PTI founder come clean and apologised for his political games that led to the May 9 mayhem. “No negotiations can occur until the founder of PTI apologises for his political manoeuvres leading to the May 9 chaos,” Iqbal asserted during a media interaction after a party meeting chaired by PML-N President Nawaz Sharif. He accused PTI of attempting to undermine the nation globally through its social media campaigns. He claimed that PTI’s founder was enjoying a “five-star” jail experience and scoffed at any notion of revenge, insisting that PTI must prove its innocence or face

the consequences. “They want an NRO, but that won’t happen. They demanded receipts from us; now it’s their turn to show proof or account for their crimes,” Iqbal asserted. Iqbal stressed that meaningful talks with PTI could only occur if the party renounces its “anti-national” politics and seeks forgiveness from the nation. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif also expressed his opposition to engaging in negotiations with PTI after the PML-N rendezvous done under the leadership of supremo Nawaz. Recent media reports suggest that the Pakistan Muslim League (N) has been in contact with Mahmood Khan Achakzai to explore indirect negotiations with PTI, with the party leadership assigning Rana Sanaullah, the Prime Minister’s advisor on political affairs, to engage with Achakzai for this purpose. The party leadership has entrusted Rana Sanaullah, the prime minister’s advisor on political affairs, with the task of liaising with Achakzai to explore this dialogue. Earlier in April, in a bid to restore much-needed political stability in the country, senators from the treasury benches made efforts on Friday to mend ties with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the opposition party across the aisle. Meanwhile, lawmakers from the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and PML-N employed conciliatory language during the upper house’s session in an attempt to win over the opposition. However, the PTI remained steadfast in its stance, accusing the ruling alliance of subjecting it to victimization. Meanwhile, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman disclosed on August 28 that discussions are

underway with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), hinting at a possible thaw in relations despite a history of bitter rivalry. Speaking after a visit to the veteran politician and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) chief Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the Maulana confirmed the talks with the PTI. During his visit to the ailing politician's residence, Fazl discussed the current political scenario. The development comes amid the shrinking gulf between PTI and JUI-F – both stung by the results of contentious February 8 elections – opening a potentially united front against the current ruling coalition. The JUI-F chief also expressed uncertainty about whether the government would be able to complete its full term. “I’m not a fortune teller to predict if the government will complete its term, but this parliament does not represent the people,” he said.