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## PM discusses developmental priorities with SCO's Zhang Ming



Published on October 17, 2024

Document Date: Sat, Jan 24 2026 10:01:58 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with the Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Zhang Ming, to discuss Pakistan's leadership role in the organisation. The meeting took place at the Prime Minister's House in Islamabad. Zhang Ming visited Pakistan to attend the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting. During their discussion, the Prime Minister welcomed Zhang, recalling his visit to Pakistan in July 2022. Shehbaz expressed gratitude

for the support provided by the SCO Secretariat for the upcoming CHG meeting. Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to the SCO charter, the Prime Minister assured Zhang that Pakistan would continue to work diligently to promote the organisation's developmental priorities for the benefit of member states and the wider region. He further emphasised that Pakistan aims to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of the SCO in collaboration with member nations. Zhang congratulated the Prime Minister on the successful organisation of the CHG meeting and commended Pakistan's constructive contributions across all SCO sectors. Earlier, Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar left Pakistan after attending the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. Before his departure, Jaishankar expressed his gratitude to the Pakistani government for their "splendid hospitality" in a message posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. "I thank the Government of Pakistan for the warm hospitality," Jaishankar wrote, extending further appreciation to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for his graciousness during the event. The Indian foreign minister also thanked his counterpart, Pakistani Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, and the people of Pakistan for the warm reception he received. He acknowledged the significance of his meetings, including face-to-face discussions with Dar during the summit. Jaishankar attended a luncheon hosted by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for the delegates at the summit, where he and Dar sat next to each other. According to sources from Express News, the two engaged

in informal conversations during the meal. Earlier, Jaishankar congratulated Pakistan on assuming the chairmanship of the SCO Heads of Council. Speaking at the summit in Islamabad, he assured that India would offer “full cooperation” during Pakistan’s tenure as chair. “Our meeting is taking place at a time when the world is facing significant challenges. Two major conflicts are ongoing, which are affecting the global situation. Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic has severely impacted developing countries,” Jaishankar said in his address. He highlighted the economic pressures faced by SCO member states, including debt challenges, and stressed the importance of mutual cooperation. The key objectives of the SCO Charter, he noted, are building mutual trust, friendship, and promoting cordial relations with neighbouring countries. He emphasised that addressing issues such as terrorism, separatism, and extremism is crucial for regional stability. “The relevance of tackling these challenges has increased in the current global context. Honest dialogue and trust between nations are essential,” Jaishankar added, calling for regional unity to overcome the hurdles faced by the organisation.