

Pakistan demands Afghanistan to hand over TTP terrorists involved in Besham attack

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Pakistan on Sunday demanded that Afghanistan take “action” against the terror group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), including its so-called leader, for its role in recent terrorist attacks in the country, including a suicide bombing of a vehicle carrying Chinese nationals in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa’s Besham. “We demand that the interim Taliban government arrest the TTP leaders, including its chief, Noor Wali Mehsud and hand them over to Pakistan in order to maintain friendly relations between the two countries,” Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi told a press conference in Lahore, along with senior security officials. On March 26, a vehicle-borne suicide bomber targeted a convoy escorting Chinese engineers in the remote Besham area of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, killing six people, including the vehicle’s driver. The Chinese engineers were en route to their camp in Dasu – the district headquarters of the Upper Kohistan district of K-P

–from Islamabad. Their vehicle was hit by an explosive-laden vehicle, coming from the opposite direction, near Lahore Nala on the Karakoram Highway. Islamabad has long accused Kabul of failing to take action against TTP terrorists who allegedly hide and operate from Afghanistan. Kabul denies the accusations. Naqvi said that the TTP was behind the attack on Chinese nationals in Besham, and that the terrorists involved have been apprehended. He revealed that the suicide attack on March 26 targeting Chinese engineers was orchestrated by TTP terrorists, with operations coordinated from Afghanistan. “We have irrefutable evidence of this,” he said. Naqvi expressed serious concerns about the use of Afghan soil for attacks on Chinese nationals. “This is a matter of grave concern for us,” he stated. The interior minister said that Pakistan has raised the issue with Afghanistan’s interim government, urging them to take action against these terrorists, but so far, there has been no positive response. He said that terrorists, including those from TTP, are being supported in border areas by the neighbouring country. “We have numerous pieces of evidence supporting this,” he asserted. Naqvi said that the TTP is operating against Pakistani interests and is involved in attacks on Chinese citizens and other acts of terrorism. He warned that terrorists are exploiting the weaknesses of Afghanistan’s interim government, creating escalating threats to Pakistan’s security from across the border. “These cross-border threats are increasingly complicating our national security,” he said. In light of these attacks, the minister said that

Pakistan has intensified border surveillance, although terrorists still manage to find ways to infiltrate. “The government of Pakistan is well aware of the forces trying to undermine Pakistan-China relations,” Naqvi noted. He emphasised the critical importance of Pakistan-China relations, stating that the security of Chinese nationals is a top priority. “We have implemented new standard operating procedures (SOPs) and are enforcing them strictly,” he added. “We are taking all possible measures to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals.”