
Kabul backtracks on Besham probe assistance

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Islamabad, A day after Pakistan sought Afghan assistance in apprehending the perpetrators of a terrorist attack on Chinese engineers, the Taliban government on Friday rejected Islamabad's request, denying any involvement in the March 26 incident. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif sent Interior Secretary Muhammad Khurram Agha to Kabul to seek cooperation in the ongoing investigation into the Besham attack. Agha met with Afghan interim Deputy Interior Minister and shared evidence linking the attack to Afghan territory.

A Foreign Office statement confirmed that Afghan authorities agreed to review the investigation findings and expressed commitment to cooperate with Pakistan to conclude the investigation. The statement emphasized Afghanistan's commitment to prevent terrorist activities from its soil against any country, including Pakistan.

However, Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid dismissed Pakistan's statement, asserting that the incident was unrelated to Afghanistan and aimed at creating distrust between Kabul and Beijing. He insisted that Pakistan should ensure its own security and not involve Afghanistan in the matter.

The developments came ahead of Prime Minister Shehbaz's official visit to China from June 4-8, following an invitation from President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang. During the visit, Shehbaz will meet with Chinese leadership in Beijing, including President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, and engage with corporate leaders from various sectors. The visit aims to strengthen the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, upgrade the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and enhance cooperation in trade, investment, security, defense, energy, technology, education, and culture.

The visit underscores the deep-rooted Pakistan-China friendship marked by frequent high-level exchanges and dialogue.