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## PTI, JUI-F urge political solutions over military operation in K-P

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Former National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman met to form a political committee, aiming to address mutual concerns and outline future political strategies. The meeting included PTI's central deputy information secretary, Akhunzada Hussain Yousafzai. The committee will focus on resolving issues between the two parties and developing a cohesive political strategy. Both leaders expressed concern over the country's political situation, particularly the deteriorating law and order in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. They stressed that political parties must play a significant role in establishing peace in the province, rejecting military operations as a solution. Qaiser and Rehman agreed to collaborate as a strong opposition in the National Assembly. They also emphasised the importance of maintaining good relations with Afghanistan, highlighting the need for exemplary ties with the

neighbouring country. The leaders proposed the establishment of economic corridors at crossing points with Afghanistan. They argued that enhanced trade activities would bring economic stability to the region and create employment opportunities. Additionally, both parties rejected the current budget, labelling it as IMF-driven and anti-public. The development comes a day after the Apex Committee of National Action Plan, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, approved “Operation Azm-e-Istehkam” to eliminate terrorism and extremism across the country. The meeting, held in Islamabad on Saturday, included key federal cabinet members such as the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Defence Minister, Interior Minister, Finance Minister, Law Minister, and Information Minister. Chief ministers from all provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan, services chiefs, provincial chief secretaries, and other senior civilian, military, and law enforcement officials also attended. The forum conducted a comprehensive review of the ongoing anti-terrorism campaign and internal security situation. It examined the progress of the National Action Plan’s multi-domain principles and highlighted areas where implementation was lacking. Emphasis was placed on addressing these shortcomings as a priority. The meeting stressed the need for a new, dynamic counter-terrorism strategy based on national consensus and broad systemic coordination. Prime Minister Shehbaz approved the reactivation of the national anti-terrorism campaign through the launch of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, symbolising national

resolve with consensus from all stakeholders, including the provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Operation Azm-e-Istehkam aims to eradicate extremism and terrorism decisively and comprehensively. It will coordinate and align efforts across multiple fronts to address the threats, while intensifying efforts to curb terrorist activities through regional cooperation within the political and diplomatic spheres. The operation will bolster the armed forces' renewed and vigorous efforts with full support from all law enforcement agencies. Effective legislation will be enacted to close legal loopholes that hinder the prosecution of terrorism-related cases, ensuring exemplary punishments for offenders. This campaign will be complemented by socio-economic measures aimed at addressing the genuine concerns of the populace and creating an environment that discourages extremist tendencies. The forum reiterated that the fight against extremism and terrorism is Pakistan's own battle, crucial for the nation's survival and welfare. It was decided that no one would be allowed to challenge the state's authority without repercussions. The forum also reviewed measures to ensure foolproof security for Chinese nationals in Pakistan. Following the prime minister's approval, new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were issued to enhance the security framework for Chinese citizens in the country.