

Pakistan Faces Political Backlash Over Trump Nobel Peace Prize Nomination

Pakistan's decision to nominate U.S. President Donald Trump for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize has sparked significant domestic backlash, following a dramatic escalation in the Middle East. The government, citing Trump's role in de-escalating the recent India-Pakistan conflict, submitted a formal letter of recommendation to the Nobel Committee on June 20, signed by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar.

However, within hours of the nomination becoming public, the United States, in coordination with Israel, launched strikes on Iran's Fordow, Isfahan, and Natanz nuclear sites, an offensive that reportedly killed nearly 950 people. The timing of the attacks has severely undercut the rationale behind the nomination, drawing sharp criticism from across Pakistan's political spectrum.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman, leader of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI-F), called the decision "deeply misguided" and urged the government to withdraw the nomination immediately. "President Trump cannot be a symbol of peace while endorsing military aggression in Palestine, Syria, and now Iran," he said during a party gathering in Murree.

Former Senator Mushahid Hussain described the move as a "foreign policy blunder," stating that Trump had "abandoned diplomacy in favor of confrontation" and had been "trapped by the Israeli war lobby." His remarks were echoed by PTI lawmaker Ali Muhammad Khan, who posted a single-word rebuke "Reconsider" in reference to the nomination. The PTI leadership later issued a statement condemning the U.S. strikes and affirming its support for Iranian sovereignty.

Diplomatic and civil society figures also weighed in. Former Ambassador to the United States Maleeha Lodhi called the nomination "unfortunate," noting that it did not reflect public opinion or Pakistan's broader diplomatic principles. Senior journalist Mariana Baabar described the announcement as "ill-timed and embarrassing," especially in light of the rapidly unfolding regional crisis.

Analysts suggest the decision was driven by strategic calculations aimed at maintaining favorable ties with the new U.S. administration. However, the subsequent developments in Iran have rendered the rationale untenable. With mounting pressure from opposition leaders, analysts, and the public, the Pakistani government may now be forced to reevaluate or formally rescind its endorsement, a move that, if delayed, could further strain its credibility both at home and abroad.