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Pakistan, Iran Strengthen Ties as Pezeshkian Ends Visit

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Iranian President Dr Masoud Pezeshkian concluded his maiden two-day visit to Pakistan, with both countries reaffirming their commitment to elevate bilateral trade to US\$10 billion annually and deepen cooperation in regional security and economic development.

Dr Pezeshkian's official trip began on 2 August in Lahore, where he visited the mausoleum of Allama Muhammad Iqbal. He was received by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The Iranian delegation then proceeded to Islamabad, where high-level meetings were held with President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

According to a statement by Pakistan's Foreign Office, the leaders discussed expanding trade, energy collaboration, and border security coordination. These discussions build on agreements signed during the visit of the late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in April 2024.

Prime Minister Sharif underscored Pakistan's ambition to increase bilateral trade from its current volume of US\$3 billion to US\$10 billion. He also highlighted opportunities under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and regional connectivity via the Silk Road. In an interview with Iran's Press TV, Dr Pezeshkian stated that Pakistan could serve as a vital trade link between Iran, China, and Europe. He emphasised the strong cultural, historical, and religious ties binding both nations.

The visit came amid heightened regional tensions. In June 2025, Iran was involved in a 12-day conflict with Israel over nuclear facility strikes—a development that Pakistan condemned at the time. Iranian state media (IRNA) quoted Pakistani parliamentarian Malik Ibrar Ahmed, who described Dr Pezeshkian's visit as a sign of “unbreakable solidarity” and reaffirmed Pakistan's support for regional stability through diplomatic engagement.

Several memoranda of understanding were signed during the visit, covering trade, technology, and border cooperation. Both sides agreed to enhance cross-border market access and address recurring security concerns along the shared border.

Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan described the visit as a milestone in consolidating Pakistan-Iran relations. The leadership also exchanged views on the situation in Gaza and jointly called for a ceasefire and renewed international diplomacy. The visit concluded on 3 August with a state banquet hosted by President Zardari. Dr Pezeshkian's delegation included Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, who held side meetings with Pakistani business and cultural leaders to explore further avenues for cooperation.