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## Pakistan Seeks Constructive Talks with India, PM Informs UK Envoy

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Pakistan's Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif expressed his country's readiness for meaningful dialogue with India to address longstanding issues, including Kashmir, during a meeting with British High Commissioner Jane Marriott in Islamabad.

Sharif's call for dialogue comes against a backdrop of strained relations, exacerbated by the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror attack, which killed 26 people, mostly Indian tourists. India attributes the attack to Pakistan-based terror groups, a claim Pakistan denies, with its

defense ministry even suggesting it was a “false flag operation.” India responded with Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan-controlled territories, leading to four days of intense clashes. A ceasefire was brokered on May 10, partly due to UK and US mediation, which Sharif acknowledged with appreciation during his meeting with Marriott. However, India remains resolute, with External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar stating that talks can only proceed if Pakistan addresses terrorism and the issue of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Pakistan’s repeated overtures for dialogue, including Sharif’s remarks to Marriott and earlier to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on June 24, 2025, signal a desire to ease tensions. Yet, India’s position, articulated by PM Narendra Modi, is clear: “Terror and talks cannot go together.” Pakistan’s historical links to groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), as acknowledged by its own leaders like Bilawal Bhutto, cast doubt on its sincerity. The UK’s Labour government, under Keir Starmer, was praised by Sharif for resuming Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flights, a move seen as boosting bilateral ties. However, this should not distract from the core issue: Pakistan must dismantle terror networks before any meaningful dialogue can occur.

While Sharif’s outreach may appear conciliatory, India’s insistence on concrete action against terrorism is justified. The international community, including the UK, should hold Pakistan accountable rather than merely facilitating talks. Without verifiable steps to curb extremism, dialogue risks being an empty gesture, leaving regional stability in jeopardy.