

Pakistan supports free trade regimes, Senate chairman tells China

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ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has underscored the need for overcoming trade imbalance, as Pakistan strongly believes in free trade regimes and will continue to support all efforts aimed at promoting free trade and open market policies.

He expressed these views in meeting with Wang Yang Chairman Chinese Peoples' Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in Beijing. In a message received from China, the Chairman Senate thanked China for providing the balance of payment support of US dollars 2 billion. He urged the Chinese investors to explore more avenues of cooperation and investment in Pakistan and the government of Pakistan would provide all possible support to encourage Chinese investment in Pakistan.

On the personal intervention of Chairman Senate, the Chinese leadership decided to send a high powered delegation comprising of businessmen and investor in explore possibilities of investment in Pakistan and to bridge the trade deficit gap and to increase Pakistani imports to China.

He said that China is a closest and strongest friend. He said that Pakistan continues to support one china policy. He said that China's rise is source of regional and global stability for Pakistan. He said that the emerging regional scenario calls for indigenous solution to the issues being faced by the Asia and China can play a major role in overcoming the challenges hampering regional development.

The Chairman Senate, along with his delegation, also met the Chairman of National People's Congress (NPC) Li Zhanshu. During meetings he emphasised the need for overcoming trade imbalance between Pakistan and China. He said that Pakistan and China share a common vision for prosperity of Asia and both Islamabad and Beijing must reinforce strategic cooperative partnership by maintaining close engagement on all issues of regional and global importance.

He said that Pakistan deeply appreciates China's steadfast and principled stand on a non-discriminatory approach towards NSG membership of non-NPT states.

During the meetings, Chairman Senate underscored the need for more close cooperation in fields of education, science and technology and said that people to people contacts and cultural cooperation will help cement ties. He said that enhanced interaction between different institutions, academia and think tanks will further enhance our mutual trust and understanding.

Regarding economic and trade relations, the Chairman Senate said that there is need to explore new vistas of cooperation and both the countries should engage in

constructive discussions to reduce trade imbalance. While discussing regional peace and stability, Chairman Senate said that Pakistan wants peaceful solution to all the issues. He said that peace and stability in Afghanistan is in the best interest of Pakistan. He appreciated China for spearheading trilateral mechanism and hoped to get good results through this mechanism.

He also highlighted the human rights violation committed by the Indian forces in Indian Held Kashmir (IHK). He said that India has unleashed a reign of terror in IHK and innocent civilians are being killed brutally.

On CPEC, Sadiq Sanjrani said that Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a model of connectivity. Promoting economic development and bringing prosperity to the people of the region. He said that CPEC as a flagship project of BRI has a strategic and economic significance for Pakistan and it enjoys support of all political parties and institutions in Pakistan being the harbinger of common good and prosperity. He appreciated President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative and his vision of shared prosperity and win-win cooperation.

The Chairman Senate also emphasised the need for further strengthening parliamentary cooperation between the two sides. He said that the friendship group in the parliament can play an effective in further cementing ties. He said that friendship with China is corner stone of our foreign policy and we take pride in our friendship with China which is our Iron-Brother.

Both the Chairmen CPPCC and NPC thanked Chairman Senate for his remarks. They said that Pakistan is trusted friend and friendship between the two is time tested. They said that China accords high priority to its relations with Pakistan and would make efforts to encourage investors to benefit from the trade and investment potential in Pakistan. The Chinese leadership agreed to send importers to Pakistan and facilitate increased trade to improve balance of trade.