

Pak PM Regrets Missing KL Summit Over Others' Misconception 'It Would Divide Ummah'

Agencies

KUALA LUMPUR - Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday expressed his regret on being unable to attend the Kuala Lumpur Summit, held in Malaysia in December of last year, adding that there was a misconception among some countries that the conference would divide the ummah.

Addressing a joint press conference following talks with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir



Mohamad in Putrajaya, Prime Minister Imran said: "I want to say how sad I was that I couldn't attend the conference in Kuala Lumpur in the middle of December.

"Unfortunately, our friends, who are very close to Pakistan as well, felt that somehow the conference was going to divide the ummah. It was clearly a misconception because that was not the purpose of the conference as evident from when the conference took place."

In December of last year, Prime Minister Imran had pulled out of the Kuala Lumpur Summit of some

20 Muslim countries reportedly due to pressure exerted by Saudi Arabia. At the time, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi had confirmed that Riyadh and the UAE had concerns about the summit.

The premier today said that he was "looking forward" to attending the conference because he felt that it is important that Muslim countries educate the West and other non-Muslim countries about Islam.

"All these misunderstandings, whether they are deliberate or whether they are by ignorance, [...] it is important that we the Muslim countries, educate them about the real message of our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

"I also felt that we need a media, which we are working on, some sort of a joint effort that not only projects this [...] but also develop content for our young people about what really Islam is."

He reiterated his regret at being unable to attend the conference.

Responding to a question about whether he would attend the KL Summit next year, Prime Minister Imran said: "Of course I would because now it is evident that the KL Summit was not to divide the ummah [...] If anything it was to unite the ummah, so of course I would love to come."

In response to another question, the premier said the decision not to attend the summit had not affected Pakistan's relations with other Muslim nations.



Coronavirus Spreads Fear And Racism Worldwide

Agencies

Sydney: As the deadly coronavirus has spread worldwide, it has carried with it xenophobia - and Asian communities around the world are finding themselves subject to suspicion and fear.

When a patient on Australia's Gold Coast refused to shake the hand of her surgeon Rhea Liang, citing the virus that has killed hundreds, the media's first response was shock.

But after tweeting about the incident and receiving a flood of responses, the respected doctor learned her experience was all too common.

There has been a spike in reports of anti-Chinese rhetoric directed at people of Asian origin, regardless of whether they have ever visited the centre of the epidemic or been in contact with the virus.

Chinese tourists have reportedly been spat at in the Italian city of Venice, a family in Turin was accused of carrying the disease, and mothers in Milan have used social media to call for children to be kept away from Chinese classmates.

In Canada, a white man was filmed telling a Chinese-Canadian woman "you dropped your coronavirus" in the parking lot of a local mall.

In Malaysia, a petition to "bar Chinese people from entering our beloved country" received almost 500,000 signatures in one week.

The incidents are part of what the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine has described as "misinformation" which it says is fuelling "racial profiling" where "deeply distressing assumptions are being made about 'Chinese' or 'Asian-looking' people."

Disease has long been accompanied by suspicions of foreigners - from Irish immigrants being tar-

geted in the Typhoid Mary panic of 1900s America to Nepali peacekeepers being accused of bringing cholera to earthquake-struck Haiti in the last decade.

"It's a common phenomenon," said Rob Grenfell, director of health and biosecurity for Australia's science and research agency CSIRO.

"With outbreaks and epidemics along human history, we've always tried to vilify certain subsets of the population," he said, comparing the behaviour to 1300s plague-ridden medieval Europe,

The World Health Organisation has warned against "measures that unnecessarily interfere with international travel and trade", but this has not stopped scores of countries from introducing travel bans.

The tiny Pacific nation of Micronesia has banned its citizens from visiting mainland China altogether.

"Travel bans respond largely to people's fears," said Hooker, and while sometimes warranted, they often "have the effect of cementing an association between Chinese people and scary viruses".

Abbey Shi, a Shanghai-born student in Sydney, said the attitude shown by some of her peers has "become almost an attack on students who are Chinese".

While Australia's conservative government has banished its citizens returning from Wuhan - the central Chinese city at the epicentre of the virus - to a remote island for quarantine, thousands of students still stuck in China risk their studies being torpedoed.

"Right now it looks like they have to miss the semester's start and potentially the whole year, because of the way the courses are set up," Shi said.

According to Hooker, studies in Toronto on the impact of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS - another global coronavirus outbreak in 2002 - showed the impact of xenophobic sentiment often lasted much longer than the public health scare.

"While there may be a cessation of direct forms of racism as news about the disease dies down, it takes quite a bit of time for economic recovery and people continue to feel unsafe," she said.

There has been a spike in reports of anti-Chinese rhetoric directed at people of Asian origin, regardless of whether they have ever visited the centre of the epidemic or been in contact with the virus.

where foreigners and religious groups were often blamed.

"Sure it emerged in China," he said of the coronavirus, "but that's no reason to actually vilify Chinese people."

In a commentary for the British Medical Journal, doctor Abbraa Karan warned this behaviour could discourage people with symptoms from coming forward.

Claire Hooker, a health lecturer at the University of Sydney, said the responses from governments may have compounded prejudice.

Pak lawyer moves SC against HC verdict of Musharraf's death sentence

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: A Pakistani lawyer has approached the Supreme Court to set aside the verdict of a high court that annulled the death sentence of self-exiled former dictator Pervez Musharraf.

The special court in Islamabad on December 17 last handed down the death penalty to the 74-year-old retired general, now based in Dubai, after six years of hearing a high-profile treason case against him.

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government led by former prime minister Nawaz Sharif had filed the treason case against the former army chief in 2013 over the imposition of an extra-constitutional emergency in November 2007, which led to the confinement of a number of superior court judges in their houses and sacking of over 100 judges.

On January 13, Musharraf's trial in the high treason case was declared as "unconstitutional" by the Lahore High Court (LHC), leading to the annulment of the death sentence against the former president.

The LHC declared that the formation of the special court was "unconstitutional" and that the treason case against Musharraf was not prepared in accordance with the law.



In an appeal on Monday, senior counsel Hamid Khan, representing petitioner Advocate Taufiq Asif, requested the apex court to set aside the LHC verdict by declaring it illegal and without lawful authority, Dawn newspaper reported on Tuesday.

The petitioner argued that the high court through its order had virtually invalidated and rendered ineffective Article 6 of the Constitution, which has a special significance and importance in the constitutional history of Pakistan.

In its order, the high court had declared constitution of the special court a violation of the Criminal Law Amendment (Special Court) Act, 1976 and said the amendment to Article 6 of the Constitution, which deals with high treason under the 18th Amendment, could not be given retrospective effect to constitute an offence committed much earlier.

China Opens Virus Hospital Built From Scratch In Under Two Weeks

Agencies

Beijing: Coronavirus patients arrived on Tuesday at a Chinese field hospital built from scratch in under two weeks at the frontline of the outbreak, state media said, following a round-the-clock construction marathon that became a national social media sensation.

The 1,000-bed facility was built to relieve hospitals swamped with patients in Wuhan, the city in Hubei province at the epicentre of the national health emergency that has killed more in China than the 2003 SARS outbreak.

Fifty patients arrived at the military-run facility, the state-backed China Daily reported, with images showing workers in protective suits pushing people in wheelchairs up a ramp and into the pre-fabricated structure.

The virus has killed more than 400 people and infected a further 20,000, nearly all of them in Hubei, and spread to two-dozen countries since it emerged in December at a market that sold wild animals in the city.

The World Health Organisation has declared the crisis a global health emergency, and the first death outside China was confirmed in the Philippines on Sunday.



As reports surfaced of bed shortages in hospitals in Wuhan, construction began on Huoshenshan - "Fire God Mountain" in Chinese - on Friday January 24.

Workers toiled day and night amid a forest of earthmovers and trucks carting materials around the site, southwest of the centre of the city of 11 million.

On the side of one of the trucks, the isolated city's new rallying cry - "Let's go Wuhan!" - was written on a banner. All workers wore masks, as mandated by the authorities for the

entire population of Wuhan, and were checked for fevers during their breaks.

By the following Friday, they had laid 400 prefabricated shipping-container-like rooms, after setting concrete foundations and routing the power supply to the complex.

The two-floor facility was handed over to the army on Sunday and will be staffed with 1,400 military medics, including some with experience dealing with SARS and Ebola.

State media had initially reported that patients would begin arriving Monday - inside the 10-day time-

frame authorities had set out when construction began.

Leishenshan ("Thunder God Mountain"), another hospital on an adjacent site, is set to start admitting patients on Thursday, with 1,600 beds.

Fire and thunder are traditionally associated in China with protection against illnesses.

Authorities said the Wuhan facilities were modelled on the Xiaotangshan hospital in Beijing, which was built from prefabricated structures in barely a week to treat patients infected by SARS in 2003.

That pathogen killed 349 people in China and hundreds more in Hong Kong and abroad.

However, with the death toll surging in Wuhan and elsewhere in Hubei province, it was not immediately clear what overall impact the hospitals would have on the virus spreading elsewhere.

The city also plans to convert three existing venues, including a gymnasium and an exhibition centre, into hospitals, the Wuhan government said.

The three buildings will be turned into healthcare facilities with a total of 3,400 beds to take in patients with mild symptoms.

OIC rejects Trump's Middle East peace

Agencies

JEDDAH - The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has said it rejects US President Donald Trump's recently unveiled Middle East plan.

The 57-member body, which held a summit on Monday to discuss the plan in Saudi Arabia's Jeddah, said in a statement that it "calls on all member states not to engage with this plan or to cooperate with the US administration in implementing it in any form".

Requested by the Palestinian leadership, the meeting of the body came two days after the Arab League rejected Trump's so-called "deal of the century", saying: "It does not meet the minimum rights and aspirations of Palestinian people."

Addressing a pro-Israel audience at the White House with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by his side, Trump on Tuesday described his long-delayed plan for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a "win-win solution" for both sides.

The US president said his pro-

posed deal would ensure the establishment of a two-state solution, promising Palestinians a state of their own with a new capital in Abu Dis, a suburb just outside Jerusalem. Trump also said Jerusalem would be the "undivided capital" of Israel. The Palestinians want both occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank to be part of a future state.

Palestinian leaders, who were absent during the announcement and had rejected the proposal even before its release, denounced the plan as "a new Balfour Declaration" that heavily favoured Israel and would deny them a viable independent state.

The OIC said in a statement on Twitter on Sunday that its "open-ended executive committee meeting" at the level of foreign ministers would "discuss the organisation's position after the US administration announced its peace plan".

With member states from four continents, the OIC is the second-largest intergovernmental organisation in the world after the United Nations, with a collective population reaching more than 1.8 billion.

The majority of its member states are Muslim-majority countries, while others have significant Muslim populations, including several African and South American countries. While the 22 members of the Arab League are also part of the OIC, the organisation has several significant non-Arab member states, including Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. It also has five observer members, including Russia and Thailand.

Iran 'barred'

Meanwhile, Iran on Monday accused its regional rival Saudi Arabia of blocking its officials from attending the OIC meeting.

"The government of Saudi Arabia has prevented the participation of the Iranian delegation in the meeting to examine the 'deal of the century' plan at the headquarters of the Organi-



zation of Islamic Cooperation," Fars news agency quoted Abbas Mousavi, spokesman for Iran's foreign ministry, as saying.

Mousavi said Iran - one of the countries to strongly condemn Trump's plan - had filed a complaint with the OIC and accused its regional rival of misusing its position as the host for the organisation's headquarters.

There was no immediate comment from Saudi officials.

Following the unveiling of Trump's plan, the Saudi foreign ministry expressed appreciation for Trump's efforts and support for direct peace negotiations under Washington's auspices, while state media reported that King Salman had called Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to reassure him of Riyadh's unwavering commitment to the Palestinian cause.

The announcement of Trump's plan drew mixed responses from Arab states.

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Mudasir Gani Lone
S/O Abdul Gani Lone R/O Pahal Daji

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NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-NIT No.: IUST/EW/20/TEND/ELE/BH/RT02, dated: 04-02-2020

For and on behalf of Vice Chancellor, Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora, J&K, Superintending Engineer, IUST invites online e-bids (in two cover system) on Item Rate Basis from registered A-Class contractors for as under.

Particulars	Estimated cost
Internal Electrification of Boys Hostel Block-II at IUST Campus, Awantipora, Pulwama.	Rs.50,00,000.00 (fifty lacs only)

The complete tender document is available at website <http://iktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders/tenders may view, download the e-bid document and submit their e-bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Bidding documents contains qualifying criteria for bidders, specifications, bill of quantities, terms and conditions of contract and other details.

Cost of e-Bid document	Rs.5000/- (Rupees five thousand only) (Non-refundable) in shape of DD only, pledged in favor of Finance Officer IUST, Awantipora.
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Date and Time of Downloading/sale (start) of Tender Document	04-02-2020 at 12:00 hrs.
Date and Time of Download/sale (End) of Tender Document	15-02-2020 at 18:00 hrs.
Date and Time of Bid Uploading (Start/End)	04-02-2020 at 12:10 / 15-02-2020 at 18:00 hrs.
Technical Bid Opening Date and Time	18-02-2020 at 14:00 hrs.
Financial Bid Opening	Shall be declared later on for the technically qualified bidders.
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