

India to host conference on peace with Pakistan

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New Delhi, Jan 7 (IANS) Amid the deep chill in India-Pakistan ties, peace activists from the two countries will pitch for a thaw and also discuss autonomy to Kashmir and Balochistan in a three-day conference to be held in the capital from Jan 10.

The conference will see eminent personalities, including 22 from Pakistan, deliberating on a host of issues concerning India and Pakistan. Former Indian prime minister I.K. Gujral is likely to open the 'India Pakistan conference - A road map towards peace'.



One of the sessions will be on issues of autonomy in Balochistan and Kashmir. The session will be addressed by human rights activist Asma Jahangir and Balochistan senator Bizenjo Hasil Khan from Pakistan and Kashmiri separatist leaders Yasin Malik and Sajad Lone, said the organisers.

"Peace activists from India and Pakistan will suggest a mechanism for peace (between the two countries)," Kuldip Nayar, a veteran journalist and one of the organisers, told reporters Thursday.

Asked if the effort would really help in breaking the ice between the two countries, Nayar said it didn't matter to them.

"We don't know if the (India and Pakistan) governments consider our suggestions. We are not concerned. We will continue our efforts till peace is built. Ours is a continuous process," Nayar told IANS on the margins of the press conference.

Key speakers from Pakistan include former ministers Sherry Rehman and Iqbal Haider, advocate Aitzaz Ahsan and defence expert Ayesha Siddiqi.

From India, the conference will be addressed by Kuldip Nayar, former minister Mani Shankar Aiyar, former navy chief L. Ramdas, Peoples Democratic Party chief Mehbooba Mufti and Kamal Chenoy of the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

The ties between the two countries broke down after the Mumbai terror attack in November 2008, for which India held terror groups in Pakistan directly

responsible. India has been maintaining that peace talks will not resume until Pakistan destroys terror sanctuaries on its soil.

Nayar asserted that India should resume talks with Pakistan as “distrust, suspicion and hostility go against the interests of the people”.

Read more: http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/south-asia/india-to-host-conference-on-peace-with-pakistan_100300381.html#ixzz0cf4KI714