

Pakistan broke protocol on Kashmir speaker: Indian envoy

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Islamabad: Pakistan broke protocol by not inviting the speaker of the Jammu & Kashmir assembly for a Commonwealth meeting here, India's envoy here T C A Raghavan has said.

The Dawn newspaper on Sunday quoted Raghavan as saying at a book release function here on Saturday night that Pakistan had invited delegations from Jammu & Kashmir in the past.

India has said it won't attend the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference if Pakistan does not invite Jammu & Kashmir speaker Kavinder Gupta, the high commissioner said.

The conference is to be held in Islamabad from September 30 to October 8. India has demanded that the venue be shifted to some other country.

Speaking at the venue, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's foreign affairs adviser Sartaj Aziz said his country would never invite a Jammu & Kashmir speaker as the legislature "does not enjoy legitimate status".

"We cannot invite the speaker of the Jammu & Kashmir assembly as the assembly does not enjoy legitimate status because it represents a disputed territory, which needs to be settled in the light of the UN resolutions," he was quoted as saying by state-run Radio Pakistan.

Pakistan's position on Jammu & Kashmir would be compromised if the speaker of the "Kashmir's legislature is invited to the conference", Aziz said.

The conference would go ahead as scheduled as over 70 percent delegates have confirmed their participation, he added.

- IANS