Brakes in the India-Pakistan Dialogue

Why in news?

Recently Pakistan Cabinet decided not to import sugar and cotton from India which will affect the ties between both the countries.

What has happened now?

- Earlier both the countries announced ceasefire at the LoC which was followed by Indus water talks, sporting visas etc.
- The Prime Ministers of both the Nations pushed for regional rapprochement and exchanged salutary messages.
- Despite this growing humour, Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan decided not to meet and exchange greetings at a Dushanbe conference held earlier.
- Now Pakistan's Foreign Minister has opposed to reopen imports of Indian cotton and sugar stating that it would violate Pakistan's commitments on Kashmir.
- Subsequently, PM of Pakistan said he is dropping the import proposal he had made in his capacity as Commerce Minister.
- He also said that ties with India would not be normalised unless the Indian government revoked its steps of August 2019, on Jammu and Kashmir and Article 370.

What was India's response?

- India decided not to comment on the events of such happenings as it does not want to press its advantage over the embarrassing confusion in Pakistan's stand.
- It has also not denied reports that claimed India-Pakistan moves were part of a back-channel dialogue facilitated by other countries.

What can we infer from this?

- Though such swings are common in the India-Pakistan engagement, the present scenario poses questions.
- If talks are really under way, it is unclear why Pakistan's import decision was not coordinated better before being publicly announced.
- This indicates that dialogue that has reportedly been on for months should

be paused.

- Any improvement in the ties will depend upon the restoration of High Commissioners in each other's capitals, commitments from Pakistan w.r.t. cross-border terrorism, resuming LoC trade.
- If re-engagement has to happen, there must be more clarity on what the two governments have decided to embark upon and hope to achieve from it.

Source: The Hindu

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