



CHIEF MINISTER'S OFFICE, PUNJAB

DEVELOPING BOTH PUNJAB AS 'BUSINESS LEADERS' OF ASIA-A KEY SUBJECT-SHAHBAZ SHARIF

CM BATS FOR STRONGER TIES BETWEEN INDO-PAK

IMPRESSES UPON SHARIF TO TAKE THE CASE OF RELAXATION OF VISA REGIME WITH PAKISTAN PM

DESPITE ALL ODDS PUNJABIS HAVE EXCELLED ACROSS THE BORDER

RECALLS HIS VIVID MEMORIES IN LAHORE

Mohali/Chandigarh, December 14:

Mian Shahbaz Sharif, Pakistan's Punjab Chief Minister and younger brother of Pakistan Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif today underlined the need to develop both Punjab's as 'Business leaders' of Asia besides setting up of a dedicated 'trade and business estate' at Integrated Check Post on Wagah-Attari Border.

Striking an emotional chord while addressing at dinner host by Punjab Government at Nature Park late last evening, Mian Shahbaz Sharif recalling his family's background at Jati Umra village of Tarn Taran district said both Punjab's were brothers, are brothers and will remain brothers. He said that time has come to make duo brothers more stronger by putting talks of all inter-related areas on fastest mode to bring a massive transformation in East vis-a-vis West Punjab. He informed Chief Minister Mr. Parkash Singh Badal that Islamabad was in constant in touch with New Delhi and expressed trust that days of cool breezes between duo nations were on anvil.

Thanking Punjab Chief Minister Mr. Parkash Singh Badal and Deputy Chief Minister Mr. Sukhbir Singh Badal for inviting them to their ancestral village, Mr. Sharif also invited Punjab CM to Lahore by reminding him his old days at FC College Lahore. He also appreciated the efforts being made by Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Mr. Sukhbir Singh Badal to make Punjab a power surplus and bring the state to new heights of progress and prosperity.

Batting for stronger ties between India and Pakistan, Punjab Chief Minister Mr. Parkash Singh Badal today urged Mian Shahbaz Sharif to impress upon his elder brother and the incumbent Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Nawaz Sharif to use his good office for relaxing visa regime between both the countries. He asked his counterpart to use his influence with Mian Nawaaz Sharif and through his good offices work for fulfilling the aspirations of all Punjabis on both sides of border. He said that relaxing of VISA regime would not only help in increasing people to people contact across the border but would also give the much required impetus to economic activity in the region. Welcoming Mian Shahbaz Sharif and his family on their maiden visit as Chief Minister to East (Indian) Punjab, Mr. Badal recalled his close personal ties with their family, especially with his brother Mian Nawaz Sharif.

The Chief Minister said that it was always a great emotional moment for Punjabis on both sides to come together adding that no one knew the pain of separation better than them. He said that people of both the Eastern and Western Punjab had to pay the greatest price during the partition as lakhs of them lost their lives whereas millions of others were displaced from their homes, lands and other properties. However Mr. Badal said that like Phoenix, Punjabis, on both the sides of border, rose again with matchless courage to be leaders in their respective countries.

The Chief Minister said that no other two people in this world have more shared culture, history, social bonds and spiritual legacy as the people of the two Punjabs spread across the India-Pakistan border have. Citing an example, he said that artistes from both sides get tremendous response whenever they visit each other's country adding that both the countries have common legacy of Gurus, saints, mystics and spiritual masters like our Gurus beginning with Baba Guru Nanak Dev ji, Sain Bulleh Shah, Baba Farid and Sain Mian Meer. Mr. Badal said that Punjabis across the border love music and dance and it was indeed a matter of great pride for them that Punjabi music and Punjabi dance – Giddha – Bhangrha were now popular even in Western clubs.

Going down the memory lane the Chief Minister recalled his college days spent in Lahore and shared his vivid memories with the gathering. Mr Badal also said that even today he aspires to visit Pakistan for reviving his vibrant memories of college days adding that even today he was very fond of the delicious Pakistani food. "Just as you feel strongly about your native village Jatti Umra, I feel the same about Lahore. Rather I am sure every Punjabi on both sides has similar sentiments"

Terming it as a historic occasion, the Chief Minister expressed gratitude to Mian Sharif for gracing the occasion with his family. He also hoped that they were able to come even close to the high standards of hospitality in Pakistan.

Prominent amongst those present on the occasion included MPs Mr. Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Mr. Balwinder Singh Bhunder, Mr. Sher Singh Ghubaya and Mrs. Paramjit Kaur Gulshan, Cabinet Ministers Mr. Sikander Singh Maluka, Mr. Sarwan Singh Phillaur, Mr. Ajit Singh Kohar, Mr. Bikram Singh Majithia and Mr. Parminder Singh Dhindsa, Chief Secretary Mr. Rakesh Singh, DGP Mr. Sumedh Singh, Special Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Mr. Gaggandip Singh Brar besides senior officers of various departments.