

Pakistan proposes to host 19th Saarc Summit in November 2016

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Kathmandu: Pakistan has proposed to host the 19th Saarc Summit in Islamabad in November 2016, and suggested three sets of dates to member states.

A top Nepali diplomat told IANS that Pakistan had circulated November 11-12, November 17-18 and November 24-25 as the possible dates but none of the member states had responded.

Pakistan earlier hosted two summits of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) 1988 and 2004.

Nepal now chairs the eight-nation regional grouping. Saarc summits are now held every two years.

Saarc is made up of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

With the Pakistani proposal, pressure is on Nepal to complete the meetings of Saarc mechanisms including the inter-summit that reviews and assesses the progress made in the past and takes up new agenda for the upcoming summit.

Nepal has proposed to host the inter-summit on March 14-17 next year. This would include meetings of the programming committee, the standing committee and the Saarc council of foreign ministers.

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