

# PAK. TOLD TO GO BEYOND COSMETIC STEPS

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Pakistan

India will not be impressed by some “cosmetic” anti-terror steps from Pakistan, the External Affairs Ministry said on Thursday. India’s response came after Pakistani media reported that Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a letter to Prime Minister Imran Khan had expressed a desire to hold talks with Islamabad.

“The Prime Minister in his letter said India wants a normal and cooperative relationship with countries in South Asia and with other countries which calls for an environment free of terror and violence. We reiterated our old position in the letter. There is no mention of dialogue with Pakistan in the letter,” said official spokesperson Raveesh Kumar.

The Prime Minister’s letter to Mr. Khan was sent on June 12, as a reciprocal gesture to the Pakistani leader’s congratulatory letter to Mr. Modi on his election victory. Both the leaders spoke on May 26 when they discussed ways to combat poverty and promote peace in the region.

Bilateral talks have been stalled after a series of terror attacks from Pakistan, starting with the 2016 Pathankot attack, derailed the India-Pakistan Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue. The escalation following the Pulwama attack further hurt the prospects for such a dialogue.

## ‘Fake’ reports

Reports in the Pakistan media on Thursday informed that Mr. Modi had written to Mr. Khan responding to a call for bilateral dialogue.

The official spokesperson, however, described the news portions that were attributed to the Indian letter as “fake”.

“They really have to take some action that can be verified. Some concrete action has to come from their side. We will not be fooled by some cosmetic or temporary actions that we have seen in the past,” said Mr. Kumar, highlighting the need for credible anti-terror action from Pakistan.

Despite differences on the future talks, both sides are in contact regarding the building of the Kartarpur corridor project.

Mr. Kumar said that Mr. Modi, in his letter, had mentioned early operationalisation of the corridor and its functioning round the year. India has so far held three technical-level discussions with Pakistan and Delhi asked for some clarifications.

“India is committed to the Kartarpur project,” Mr. Kumar said.

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