

WON'T ACCEPT ANY PAK ATTEMPT TO ENGAGE WITH HURRIYAT: GOVT

Govt boycotts Pak National Day, PM sends greetings to people of Pakistan

Modi calls for 'peaceful... region, in an atmosphere free of terror, violence'

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 22

ON A day the NDA government decided to boycott the Pakistan National Day reception at its High Commission's lawns, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan disclosed that he had received a message from Prime Minister Narendra Modi where he said that it is time that people of the sub-continent "work together for a democratic, peaceful, progressive & prosperous region, in an atmosphere free of terror and violence".

Within hours of Pakistan's National Day reception wrapping up, Khan tweeted: "I welcome PM Modi's message to our people. As we celebrate Pakistan Day I believe it is time to begin a comprehensive dialogue with India to address & resolve all

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EXPLAINED

Protest and protocol

THE GOVERNMENT'S first ever boycott of Pakistan National Day along with its ban on JKLF sends a hard message on Kashmir to Pakistan. But by not departing from the tradition of sending greetings to Pakistan, the Prime Minister has kept the diplomatic door ajar.



Shareefa Jan's son Atif was killed in Bandipora. Shuaib Masoodi

12-yr-old boy killed despite mother's appeal to militants

ADIL AKHZER
HAJIN (BANDIPORA), MARCH 22

A 12-YEAR-OLD boy held hostage in Bandipora for around 24 hours was killed Friday by militants

before they were gunned down by security forces. While the boy's uncle, who was also held hostage was rescued Thursday, police said militants refused to let the boy out despite pleas on loudspeakers by his family.

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Govt security screens invites and invitees; China makes its presence felt

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 22

FIVE MINUTES to 8 pm, the Indian national anthem was played in the Pakistan High Commission lawns while the Tricolour fluttered along with Pakistan's national flag.

With no Indian government's representative present at the occasion, on stage were Pakistan's High Commissioner Sohail Mahmood and wife Mahwish.

In the crisp March evening as a cool breeze swept through the lawns, the attendance was thinner than usual — the government's security establishment

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DECISION 2019

Pitroda has questions on Balakot, PM says he kick-started Pak day

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 22

TECHNOCRAT-TURNED-CONGRESS politician Sam Pitroda was at the centre of a political row Friday after he sought "more facts" and proof of the death toll in the Balakot air strike and, while referring to the Mumbai 26/11 attack, said one cannot "jump on an entire nation... just because some people came here and attacked".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tore into the Congress, saying it was a "shame" that Rahul Gandhi's "most trusted advisor and guide" had "kick-started the Pakistan National Day celebrations on behalf of the Congress, ironically by demeaning India's armed forces".

BJP president Amit Shah, in a tweet, said: "Difference between Opposition and BJP is clear. They



He sought 'more facts' on Balakot air strike. Raaj Dayal

suspect our army, we are proud of our army. Their heart beats for terrorists, ours beats for the Tiranga. This election, through the power of your vote, do a surgical strike on the Congress culture. #JantaMaafNahiKaregi"

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, referring to Pitroda as "guru" of Rahul Gandhi, said: "Agar guru aisa ho aur uske

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EC clears 2nd farm payout but only to those named before code

RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 22

THE GOVERNMENT is learnt to have got the Election Commission's (EC) nod for releasing the second instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme from April 1. The permission, however, is limited to beneficiaries identified before the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) came into force on March 10.

In its response to the Ministry of Agriculture this week, the Commission, sources said, reiterated its instructions of March 5, 2009, which state that "beneficiary projects where specific beneficiaries by name have been identified before coming of the Model Code of Conduct into force" can be continued, even after elections are announced.

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Cong alleges payoffs by BSY to his leaders, BJP calls it a web of lies, poll desperation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 22

A ROW erupted Friday after the Congress, citing a report in the Caravan magazine, alleged that former Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yeddyurappa had paid bribes to the tune of Rs 1,800 crore to the BJP leadership. Rejecting the charge, the BJP said the Congress, fearing defeat in the Lok Sabha

polls, was resorting to "falseness, misrepresentation" and a "web of lies".

As Yeddyurappa too denied the allegation, the Central Board of Direct Taxes issued a statement saying the entries in "loose sheets prima facie appear to be of a doubtful nature and were given by the person who was being raided for tax violations".

Congress communication

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After Jamaat, Centre bans JKLF, cites separatism

RAHUL TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 22

WEEKS AFTER banning the Jamaat-e-Islami, the Centre Friday announced that the Yasin Malik-led Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) has been banned as well for "promoting"

secession of the militancy-hit state. The JKLF was banned under various provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act after a high-level meeting on security chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Declaring the JKLF an unlawful organisation, Union Home

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JKLF chief Yasin Malik is lodged in Jammu jail

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BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



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