

Modi, Putin talk def, counter-terror

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New Delhi: India and Russia started off the year with a high-level conversation between PM Narendra Modi and Russian President Putin where the two leaders focused on defence and counter-terrorism. The conversation was significant in the context of evolving security situation in Afghanistan.

India and Japan also started off the year with the first strategic dialogue between Japanese foreign minister Taro Kono and Sushma Swaraj. Following up on the last summit between Modi and Shinzo Abe, the dialogue, according to the MEA spokesperson, focused on



PM Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin

“regional connectivity, economic partnership, new and digital technologies, health-care, renewable energy, defence cooperation and maritime security”.

Later Taro Kono called on PM Modi. “The PM said India looks forward to the next round of annual summit with Japan, later this year,” said a government

spokesperson.

India has also started off the year with the government’s biggest geopolitical talk-shop, the fourth Raisina Dialogue, which it holds together with Observer Research Foundation. Announcing the dialogue, which is now a global competitor to the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, the MEA spokesperson said it was the government’s “flagship annual geopolitical and geostrategic conference” featuring 600 delegates from 93 countries.

With a focus on Europe and Eurasia, the dialogue will be inaugurated by Erna Solberg, PM of Norway. The MEA said, “This year, the theme of the Dialogue is “A

World Reorder: New Geometries; Fluid Partnerships, Uncertain Outcomes”. The discussions will seek to address issues arising from global transitions and changes to the world order. Former Canadian PM Stephen Harper is also visiting India and will be meeting Modi. Meanwhile, Marisa Payne, Australia’s foreign minister is also here and slated to meet Sushma Swaraj and defence minister Nirjala Sitharaman along with speaking at Raisina Dialogue.

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