

Pak. seeks to resume dialogue with India

Welcomes PM's call to PTI chief Imran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Thursday welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's congratulatory phone call to Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf chief Imran Khan and said it wanted the resumption of bilateral talks, which were halted in 2015.

On Monday, Mr. Modi telephoned Mr. Khan to congratulate him on his party's victory in the election, and hoped that "Pakistan and India will work to open a new chapter in bilateral ties."

Mr. Khan thanked him for his wishes, and emphasised that disputes should be resolved through dialogue.

During his weekly press briefing here, Foreign Office

spokesperson Muhammad Faisal said he hoped the phone call would pave the way for bilateral talks between India and Pakistan. He said Pakistan was ready to host the SAARC Summit.

He hoped that it would lead to an improvement in ties with the SAARC member states, including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, the Maldives and Sri Lanka, in addition to India. The 2016 SAARC Summit was to be held in Islamabad, but after a major terror attack on an Army camp in Uri in J&K on September 18 that year, India expressed its inability to participate in it.

The summit was called off after Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan also declined to participate.