



## Peace doesn't only mean 'no war': Modi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said "the definition of peace has changed in the last hundred years" and "today, peace does not only mean 'no war'."

In his monthly radio broadcast, Modi recalled the death and devastation caused by the World War I and said "this made the whole world realise and understand the importance of peace. The definition of peace has changed in the last hundred years. Today, peace does not only mean 'no war'."

Pointing out that November 11 this year will mark the hundred years of end of World War I, he said "There is a need to work unitedly to address issues such as terrorism, climate change, economic development to social justice through universal cooperation and co-ordination. Development of the poorest of the poor is the real indicator of peace."

Modi said wherever there will be a talk of world peace, "India's name and contribution will be written in golden letters. For India, 11th of November this year has a special significance because on 11th November a hundred years back the World War I had ended....For India, World War I was an important event."

"Rightly speaking we had no direct connection with that war. Despite this, our soldiers fought bravely and played a very big role and made the supreme sacrifice. Indian soldiers showed it to the world that they are second to none if it comes to war. Our soldiers have displayed great valour in difficult areas and adverse conditions. There has just been a single objective behind it - restoration of peace."



Honduran migrants taking part in a caravan heading to the US, leave Arriaga on their way to San Pedro Tapanatepec, southern Mexico on Saturday. Mexico on Friday announced it will offer Central American migrants medical care, education for their children and access to temporary jobs as long as they stay in two southern states.

PHOTO: AFP

### REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS

## Trump turns down India's invite: report

NDTV ONLINE

US president Donald Trump has reportedly declined India's invitation to be the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations. In early August, White House press secretary Sarah Sanders had confirmed Trump received an invite to visit India. "I know that the invitation has been extended, but I do not believe that a final decision has been made," Sanders told reporters then.

The foreign ministry has not given a statement. The American embassy in Delhi said only the White House can comment on the president's travel plans.

For the last few weeks, US officials have been indicating that Trump would not fly to India in January as the State of the Union address is scheduled in the winter month.

However, former US president Barack Obama came to India twice and also attended the Republic Day celebration in 2015 on his second visit, despite the State of the Union address falling in January every year.

Trump turning down the invitation could be seen as a low point in India-US ties, despite the good rapport Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he appears to have in public.

Normally, formal invites to leaders for Republic Day are sent after the leader has already confirmed his or her attendance. Former diplomats have criticised the government for leaking the invitation letter to Trump before a confirmation.

Trump declining India's invitation to be the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations comes weeks after India and the US have had a rough time over a range of geopolitical issues.

India's insistence on buying oil from Iran despite US sanctions on the oil-producing nation was not taken well by the Trump administration.

## A hate-filled week in US

From pipe bombings to synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh, three incidents in 72 hours shared one thing: hate

AGENCIES

Americans witnessed a series of crimes and violent acts past week. A white man with a history of violence shot and killed two African-Americans at a Kentucky Kroger store following a failed attempt to barge into a black church.

After mail bombs were being sent to people who'd been criticised by the President, a suspect was arrested Friday -- a man with hate-filled messages online.

And Saturday morning, a man shouting anti-Semitic slurs opened fire at a Pittsburgh synagogue, killing 11 people. Those three incidents in 72 hours shared one thing: hate.

Gregory Bush tried first to enter a church in Jeffersonton, Kentucky on Wednesday. It was the predominantly black First Baptist Church, and he allegedly banged on the door and tried to pull it open.

Bush, a 51-year-old white man, didn't manage to get inside as the doors were locked. Bush then headed to a Kroger store, where he allegedly

shot two people, both African-American. Bush has a history of mental illness and made racist threats, according to court records. When the Kentucky shooting happened, the nation was getting nervous about an increasing number of suspicious pack-

Suspect charged with 11 counts of murder in synagogue shooting

Trump plans frenzied campaign push after bomb suspect's arrest

ages being sent through the mail.

The first one was discovered Monday afternoon at the home of billionaire George Soros. Wednesday morning, the Secret Service said two more had been found -- one addressed to Hillary Clinton, and another to former President Barack Obama.

On Friday came word of more packages, and then an arrest -- a 56-year-old Florida man named Cesar Sayoc.

Sayoc's political inclinations were passionately displayed for everyone to see. His white Dodge van was plastered with pro-Trump messages showing prominent liberals in crosshairs.

A man shouting anti-Semitic slurs ran inside the Tree of Life synagogue in the neighbourhood of Squirrel Hill in Pittsburgh and opened fire, killing 11 people. Six people were injured in the attack on Saturday morning.

Robert Bowers, 46, was identified as the gunman and arrested. He had frequently expressed his disdain for Jews on social media. Bowers was charged with 11 counts of murder yesterday, reported AFP.

Trump on Saturday plunged into a frenzied last 10 days of campaigning ahead of crucial midterm elections, seeking to regain the spotlight briefly seized by the arrest of a Florida fan of his charged with mailing bombs to more than a dozen of the US president's leading critics.

## 'India helped in restoration of democracy in Maldives'

PTI, New Delhi

India played a "positive" role in restoration of democracy in Maldives by "exerting pressure" on the ruling regime, and the new government in the island nation would be "sensitive" towards New Delhi's "concerns", former Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom said yesterday.

Nearly a month after he was released from jail, Gayoom, who ruled Maldives for three decades until 2008, said the government of President Abdulla Yameen inflicted "huge damage" on Maldives but democratic forces have prevailed over their "enemies".

Joint opposition leader Ibrahim Mohamed Solih came out victorious in the September 23 presidential election, handing a shock defeat to incumbent Yameen and capping months of political upheaval in the tourist paradise.

The political turmoil was triggered by imposition of emergency in February and jailing of several of opposition leaders including Gayoom, a half brother of Yameen.

After much tension, Yameen is scheduled to transfer power to new government on Nov 17.

Asked whether Yameen drew his strength from strong backing by China, Gayoom, credited with forging strong ties with India, hoped that China would respect the will of the Maldivian people.

Asked about India's role after imposition of emergency by Yameen in February, Gayoom said, "India did play a positive role, and along with other international partners, did exert pressure towards restoration of democracy."

Describing India as the "closest and most trusted ally" of Maldives, he said it was in the interests of all of the Maldives' geographical neighbours that there is stability in the Indian Ocean region.

"I am confident that the new government will work towards achieving this. We will be sensitive towards the concerns of India as well as of other friends," he said, adding Maldives was looking forward to welcoming Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Maldives "very soon".



Gayoom

## Pak opens complaint portal for citizens

DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan yesterday inaugurated the Pakistan Citizens' Portal -- set up at the Prime Minister Office with an aim to "timely address the problems of the people and get their feedback".

The portal will be available to citizens in the form of a cellphone app, but they will also be able to approach the government via telephone, email or written letters.

The portal will be used to send complaints and suggestions to Prime Minister Office directly, according to Radio Pakistan, and the office will oversee the "process of addressing the public complaints and implementation on recommendations".

PM Khan, while addressing the inauguration ceremony in Islamabad, described the system as "the first step towards improving governance" and creating a conducive environment for investment.

"The system that we've developed is a means to change the prevailing mindset. For the first time, government offices and ministries will be accountable," the premier said, adding that it would give ordinary Pakistanis, both home and abroad, a voice.

"The portal will make it easy for me to get details of where in Pakistan the complaints are coming from, about which ministries," said the premier.

"All policy-making will be done after hearing the voice of the people. I believe this will bring a quantum change in Pakistan which is very important for our future," he added.



British royals Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle is being greeted with Maori custom during an official welcoming ceremony at Government House in Wellington, yesterday. Prince Harry and Meghan arrived in Wellington yesterday to start the last leg of their 16-day, four-nation tour after attending the closing ceremony of the 2018 Invictus Games in Sydney.

PHOTO: REUTERS, AFP

## Merkel party hammered in key regional vote

AFP, Frankfurt

The parties of German Chancellor Angela Merkel's right-left "grand coalition" took a beating yesterday, strengthening fears that the second tough regional election in as many weeks could threaten the alliance's survival.

After allowing more than one million migrants into Germany since 2015, sparking a strong backlash against immigration, Merkel has been battling for her political future.

According to an exit poll in Hesse state by public broadcaster ARD, Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) shed around 10 points for a 28-percent score, compared with 38.3 percent in 2013.

Meanwhile junior federal coalition partners the Social Democrats (SPD) tumbled almost 11 points to 20 percent.

The blow follows similar losses for Merkel's CSU sister party in Bavaria's regional poll earlier this month.

The result is another milestone in the long decline of the big-tent "people's parties" CDU and SPD that have dominated German politics for decades.

Electoral momentum is on the side of newer parties, more tightly focused on a narrow range of issues.



Propelled by the backlash to Merkel's migration policy into the federal Bundestag last year, the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) is now represented in all 16 of Germany's state legislatures, after Hessian voters handed it a 12-percent score.

The protest party has eaten into both the CDU and SPD vote by railing against migrants and refugees as well as uncaring Berlin elites.

The chancellor is weakened after years of battling over her 2015 open borders decision.

While migration and asylum policy has been sharply tightened since, it has not been enough to stop desertions to the AfD and disquiet in the CDU's own ranks.

STAY THE COURSE

After 13 years with Merkel at the helm, most of them in coalition with the SPD, many Germans are tired of government by carefully-crafted compromise, calling instead for clear direction on pressing policy issues like migration, security, reform of the European Union and climate change.

Nor did the veteran leader's fourth government get off to a good start after its formation earlier this year, with two rows over relatively minor points bringing it to the brink of collapse over the summer.

## 4-nation summit calls for lasting Idlib ceasefire

AFP, Istanbul

The leaders of Turkey, Russia, France and Germany on Saturday called for a political solution to Syria's devastating seven-year civil war and a lasting ceasefire in the last major rebel-held bastion of Idlib.

A joint statement adopted at the end of a major summit in Istanbul said the countries were committed to working "together in order to create conditions for peace and stability in Syria".

It also "stressed the importance of a lasting ceasefire" in Idlib, while hailing "progress" following a deal last month between Syrian-regime supporter Russia and rebel-backer Turkey to create a buffer zone around the northwestern province.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan spoke for several hours with Russia's Vladimir Putin, France's Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel about the Syrian conflict, in which more than

360,000 people have been killed since 2011.

Their statement, read by Erdogan, called for a committee to be established to draft Syria's post-war constitution before the end of the year, "paving the way for free and fair elections" in the war-torn country.

It also said there was "the need to ensure humanitarian organisations' rapid, safe and unhindered access throughout Syria and immediate humanitarian assistance to reach all people in need".

French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel remained at odds on the sidelines of the Syria summit in Istanbul over the issue of halting lucrative arms sales to Saudi Arabia in response to the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Meanwhile, IS group has ousted a US-backed coalition of Kurdish and Arab forces from its holdout in eastern Syria, killing dozens of fighters, a monitoring group said yesterday.

### SYRIA CIVIL WAR

Committee to be formed to draft post-war charter before year-end

IS repels US-led forces from east Syria holdout

## NEWSIN brief

### Brazilians vote to elect president

AFP, Rio De Janeiro

Brazil began voting yesterday in a divisive presidential run-off election whose front-runner, far-right former army captain Jair Bolsonaro, is vowing to rescue the country from crisis with a firm grip. Bolsonaro faces leftist Fernando Haddad, a former Sao Paulo mayor, who is trailing Bolsonaro by at least 10 points margin. The results are expected around 2300 GMT.

### Qatar 'kafala' reform comes into force

AFP, Doha

Long-awaited reform of Qatar's controversial exit visa system, which requires foreign workers to obtain their bosses' permission to leave the country, came into force yesterday, the government said. Qatar announced in September it had approved legislation to scrap the visa system -- a linchpin of the country's "kafala", or sponsorship, system which many liken to modern-day slavery. There are some two million foreign workers in Qatar.

### 'Arab Nato' to be formed by next year

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

Bahrain's Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa has said a planned Gulf security alliance, expected to include Egypt, will be formed by next year. At a security summit in capital Manama on Saturday, Khalifa said the Middle East Strategic Alliance (Mesa), an initiative pushed by US President Donald Trump to confront Iran, will help the Gulf remain "a pillar of stability". White House officials have called the MESA alliance an "Arab Nato".