

*Jehlum Post News Network/Islamabad/ March 12, 2015/ Pakistan will continue its longstanding practice of interacting with the Kashmiri leadership despite objections from the Indian government,said a foreign ministry spokesman*

*on Wednesday. "As you know meetings between the All Parties Hurriyat Conference leadership and Pakistan's high commissioner in New Delhi is a longstanding practice and it will continue," Riffat Masood, the acting spokesperson for the Foreign Office told The Express Tribune. She was responding to recent criticism in the Indian media about Pakistan High Commissioner Abdul Basit's meeting with veteran Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani in New Delhi. Basit visited Geelani's residence to brief him about the outcome of the recent talks between the foreign secretaries of Pakistan and India. India cancelled the foreign secretary-level talks in August last year at the last moment as a protest over the Pakistani high commissioner's meeting with the Kashmiri leaders. But the spokesperson rejected the Indian concerns, saying that Pakistan "recognises the Hurriyat as the true representatives of the Kashmiri people and hence regular meetings take place with them". "India is well aware of this practice and should not be raising any objection in this regard," Riffat emphasised. The spokesperson also rejected the allegations levelled by the Indian external affairs minister that the Indian High Commission staff in Pakistan was subjected to 'intrusive surveillance'. "There has been no such incident or complaint by the Indian High Commission to us in this regard," Riffat said when approached to seek Pakistan's reaction to the Indian claim. Tribune*