

## **Chinese prefer Pakistan as neighbour; want to move India away: Survey**

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**Beijing:** Majority of Chinese would like to move India away along with Japan and a host of other neighbouring countries with whom Beijing has territorial disputes and would prefer Pakistan and Nepal as neighbours, if given a chance to 'play God' to redraw China's map.

A total of 13,196 people wanted to "move away" Japan, the highest number of votes polled in a survey seeking their views to select neighbours, if they can 'Play God' and rearrange the countries at China's borders.

More than 200,000 Internet users took part in the survey conducted by the Chinese edition of the state-run tabloid Global Times known for its nationalistic postures.

Other countries that were "moved away" include the Philippines (11,671), Vietnam (11,620), North Korea (11,024), India (10,416), Afghanistan (8,506), and Indonesia (8,167), the results published in the daily today said.

While historical disputes including the Second World War atrocities by Japanese forces may have weighed in Chinese people's minds to move Japan away, the border dispute and "protection" to Dalai Lama and his associates whom China regards as separatists led to adverse view of India, Chinese analysts said.

"China and India have disputes over 120,000 square kms of land and the two have not signed treaty to settle the border disputes," Sun Lizhou, deputy director of the Academy of the World and China Agendas, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, told the Global Times.

India-China have a disputed border stretching up to 3448 kms. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of Southern Tibet. The recent initiatives by India and China to improve relations had little effect on Chinese perceptions.

Unsurprisingly majority wants Pakistan often referred as all-weather ally by Chinese leaders and media to remain as a neighbour.

"Net users used their votes to show the bond shared by China and Pakistan, with 11,831 people wanting the country to 'stay as a neighbour'," the report said.

Considering the fast developing ties with Nepal, the Chinese wants it too to remain as a neighbour.

The news paper gave 36 countries to choose from as options for "new neighbours".

Sweden earned 9,776 votes, accounting for 5.8 per cent.

And the other six countries that netizens would most like to be closer are New Zealand, Germany, the Maldives, Singapore, Norway and Thailand.

While preferring to move away Japan, ironically, Japan actually fits many of the criteria netizens said were desirable in a neighbour, such as being the fourth largest trade partner of China in addition to its wealth and stability, Sun said.

Net users choose to "move away Japan" because the Japanese government has not apologised over historical issues and the dispute over the disputed islands has soured China-Japan relations, Sun said.

- PTI