

China willing to maintain 'hard-won sound' ties with India: Xi Jinping tells PM Modi in meeting

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Hangzhou: China is willing to work with India to maintain their "hard-won sound" ties and further boost bilateral cooperation, President Xi Jinping told Prime Minister Narendra Modi here today as the two leaders held talks amid differences over a raft of issues.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping

"China is willing to work with India to maintain their hard-won sound relations and further advance their cooperation", state-run Chinese Xinhua news agency quoted Xi as saying during their half an hour meeting, their second in less than three months.

The two leaders met before they attended the BRICS(Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) leaders meeting held ahead of the G20 summit here.

This was Modi's second meeting with Xi in less than three months. The two leaders had last met at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in June in Tashkent and again set to meet in Goa next month on the sidelines of BRICS summit.

The meeting between the two leaders comes in the backdrop of contentious issues including listing of Pakistan-based terrorist organisations in the UN, China stalling India's membership at the elite Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and USD 46 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The two leaders, who enjoy a good rapport, are expected to have discussed all outstanding issues.

Officials on both sides attach importance to the meeting in view of growing differences between the two Asian giants on bilaterally sensitive issues like listing of Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Muhammad leader Masood Azhar.

China too has been concerned over the close ties of India with the US and the recently signed Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) which will give the militaries of both countries access to each other's facilities for supplies and repairs.

Bilateral meeting was followed by a meeting of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) leaders ahead of the G20 summit, which would begin later in the day.

Modi reached Hangzhou last night after concluding his two day visit in Hanoi. He will also have bilateral meeting with his Australian counterpart Malcolm Turnbull and Saudi Arabia's Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

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He will attend the G20 summit that begins today with this year's theme of "Strengthening Policy coordination and Breaking a new path for growth" followed by a number of cultural programmes organised by the Chinese government.

On Monday, he will take part in the second and concluding session of the G20 and hold bilateral meetings with British Prime Minister Theresa May and Argentinian President Mauricio Macri before returning to Delhi.

The top 20 leaders of the world including the US President Barack Obama, Russian President Vladimir Putin and the new UK Prime Minister Theresa May, have gathered in the Chinses city for the two-day summit.

The summit will be inaugurated on Sunday afternoon and will be followed by a banquet in the evening.