

Sushma Swaraj meets Chinese counterpart, raises Lakhvi issue

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Kathmandu: External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj today raised with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi China's blocking of India's move in the UN for action against Pakistan over 26/11 mastermind Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi's release, saying it was at "variance" with progress in ties.

In the meeting held on the sidelines of an international donors conference here, Swaraj told the Chinese Foreign Minister that Lakhvi was "no ordinary terrorist" as he masterminded the Mumbai terror attack in which more than 166 people were killed.

"The External Affairs Minister raised the issue of Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi on the stand China has taken on this matter in the United Nations 1267 committee. She said both India and China have been victims of terrorism and therefore there should be no distinction made between good terrorists and bad terrorists," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Vikas Swarup said.

"She said China's stand on the matter appears to be at variance with the excellent progress otherwise being achieved in India-China bilateral relationship," Swarup said.

He said Wang assured Swaraj that China opposes all forms of terrorism and that he will look into the matter. "He (Wang) assured that there was no reason why India and China could not cooperate more closely on anti-terrorism efforts," Swarup said.

At a meeting of the UN Sanctions Committee, India had sought action against Pakistan for release of Lakhvi in the 26/11 trial in violation of a UN resolution but the Chinese representatives blocked the move on grounds that New Delhi did not provide sufficient information.

Lakhvi, the mastermind of the 26/11 terror attack, was released from a Pakistani jail in April. The UN Sanctions Committee met at India's request last week.

In a letter to the current Chair of the UN Sanctions Committee Jim McLay, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Asoke Mukherjee last month had said Lakhvi's release by a Pakistani court was in violation of the 1267 UN resolution dealing with designated entities and individuals.

The sanctions measures apply to designated individuals and entities associated with terror groups including al-Qaeda and LeT, wherever located.

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