

China responds to PM Modi taking up Lakhvi issue with Xi Jinping

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Beijing: A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi had taken strongly taken up with China over blocking action in the UN against Pakistan on the release of Mumbai attack mastermind Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, Beijing today defended its step saying it was based on "facts" and in the spirit of "objectiveness and fairness".

"As a permanent member of the UN Security Council China always deals with the 1267 committee matters based on facts and in the spirit of objectiveness and fairness," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told reporters here today.

She was responding to a question on Modi "strongly" and "clearly" conveying India's concerns yesterday to President Xi Jinping in Ufa, Russia, over China blocking a proposal for action by the UN against Pakistan on the release of Lakhvi.

India had also rejected the "weak evidence" theory propounded by Beijing in this regard. Terming Modi-Xi talks as "constructive and inclusive", she said China has maintained good communication with India and other parties on the Lakhvi issue.

About India's concerns over terrorism, she said, "I can tell you that both India and China are victims of terrorism." China opposes all forms of terrorism and support the UN playing the leading role in coordinating international cooperation on anti-terrorism. China has actively taken part in global cooperation.

At a meeting of the UN Sanctions Committee last month, India had sought action against Pakistan for release of LeT commander 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.

Today's replies by Hua were little more elaborate than the Chinese Foreign Ministry's earlier replies on the issue.

On July 2, answering questions on the technical hold put by China on the Lakhvi issue in UN, Deputy Director General of the Asian Affairs Department of Chinese Foreign Ministry Huang Xilian said the issue should be discussed in the India-China joint mechanism on terrorism between the two countries. "We have mechanism of counter-terrorism consultation between the two ministries" in which it can be discussed, he had said.

However, in his briefing after Modi-Xi talks last night, Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar said, "there is no particular mechanism. The MEA can discuss with the Embassy (Chinese)." There are a range of mechanisms.

The Prime Minister conveyed to Xi how the people of India viewed the Chinese action. China had earlier also put a technical hold on India's demand for UN Security Council to take action against Hizbul Mujahudeen Chief Syed Salahuddin and LeT leader Hafeez Sayed citing rules the UNSC resolution 1267.

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

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