

## **China wants maritime cooperation with India in Indian Ocean**

10/07/2015 21:03 by admin

**Beijing:** China today said it wants to step up maritime cooperation and dialogue with India and other South Asian countries to allay their concerns over increased Chinese naval activity in the Indian Ocean including docking of its submarines in different ports in the region.

"China is willing to work with India and relevant countries to step up maritime cooperation and dialogue and to contribute constructively to peace and stability in the Indian Ocean region," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a media briefing.

Asked about India's concerns due to increased Chinese military presence in the Indian Ocean with its naval vessels docking in different ports, she said China has deepened cooperation with various South Asian countries in recent years.

"It is natural that we have military interactions which will be conducive to peace and security," she said.

The docking of Chinese submarines last year at Colombo Port and recently at Pakistan's Karachiport has raised concerns in India while Chinese officials said earlier these were routine visits which is a common practice the world over.

"So I cannot say how it is linked to China's strategy in the Indian Ocean. China is committed to have healthy and sound relationship with South Asian countries," she said adding that India-China relations have been strengthened in recent years.

She said, President Xi Jinping had a very constructive and amicable meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Russian city of Ufa yesterday on the sidelines of the BRICS and SCO summits.

"Mutual trust between the two countries has been strengthened. We maintain good communication and coordination on major international issues. We also believe that in the globalised era, the security of Indian Ocean is in the common interest of all countries," she said.

- PTI