

FOREIGN SECRETARY VISITS BEIJING FOR 'BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS'

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale will arrive in Beijing on Sunday for “bilateral consultations”, amid signs that China may review its position on lifting its “technical hold” on listing Jaish-e-Mohammad founder Masood Azhar as an international terrorist.

Mr. Gokhale is arriving ahead of the Belt and Road Forum (BRF) — a mega event hosted by China that begins on April 25, in which 37 heads of state or government are participating.

The Foreign Secretary will hold talks with China’s State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Monday.

On Friday, Mr. Wang said at a briefing on the BRF that the two countries were preparing for a second edition of a leadership summit as a follow-up to last year’s informal summit at Wuhan.

India has been pressing China to designate Azhar as a global terrorist after his outfit claimed responsibility for the February 14 Pulwama attack, in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

On March 13, China placed a “technical hold” on designating Azhar in the 1267 committee of the United Nations Security Council, despite stating that it was engaged in “mediation efforts” to ease tensions between India and Pakistan that spiked on February 27 following the Indian cross-border air strike on Balakot in Pakistan.

Consensus emerging

Since April 1, China has been saying that a consensus was emerging within the 1267 committee on designating Azhar, after rejecting a parallel initiative by the United States, backed by Britain and France, to seek a ban on him through a separate resolution in the Security Council plenary.

On Wednesday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said the Azhar issue was “moving towards the direction of settlement”.

Analysts point out that it is unlikely that China will lift its “technical hold” on Azhar before the BRF concludes on April 27, so as not to embarrass Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, who will be participating in the international event.

Join our online subscriber community

Experience an advertisement-free site with article recommendations tailored for you

Already a user? [Sign In](#)

To know more about Ad free news reading experience and subscription [Click Here](#)

or Please remove the Ad Blocker

END

CrackIAS.com