

NO HOLDS BARRED: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON THE CHINESE HURDLE TO DESIGNATE TERRORISTS

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By choosing to place a [“technical hold” on the joint India-U.S. proposal](#) to designate [Jaish-e-Mohammad deputy chief Rauf Asghar](#) a global terrorist on the [United Nations Security Council 1267 Committee listing](#), China has swung another blow to its ties with India, which are already at a fragile point. Despite 16 rounds of military commander talks at the Line of Actual Control, [India and China have failed to resolve the standoff](#) that began with the PLA amassing troops, and transgressions along the LAC in April 2020. The two sides sparred in the maritime sphere this week, after India made its concerns over the [proposed docking of a Chinese satellite tracking ship at Sri Lanka’s Hambantota port](#) clear to the Sri Lankan government. And while bilateral trade has recovered from the COVID-19 downturn, [Chinese technology majors in India are being raided by the Enforcement Directorate](#) and Income Tax authorities under suspicion of a range of financial crimes. At a time when bilateral trust is already in such deficit comes China’s decision to stop an important terror listing, just two months after [Beijing similarly stopped the designation of Lashkar-e-Taiba deputy chief Abdul Rahman Makki](#). To take such measures on an issue that it knows India has always been extremely serious about, given the number of major attacks perpetrated on Indians by the LeT and JeM, right from the 1990s, is insensitive at the least, but part of an unfortunate pattern by China, which has held up several such listings in the past. Asghar is wanted for his role in freeing his brother Masood Azhar in the most dastardly way, by organising the hijack of Indian Airlines flight IC-814, and holding nearly 200 civilians hostage on the Kandahar tarmac, and other attacks. He is now reportedly in Pakistani prison, convicted on terror-related charges, and is on both the U.S.’s and India’s domestic ‘most wanted terrorist’ lists.

It is important, however, for India to persevere with attempts to designate both Makki and Asghar, as well as other terrorists responsible for attacks on Indians, without losing faith in the process. One option is to keep the international pressure up, and garner more co-sponsors for the listing, which was reportedly approved by 14 of 15 UNSC members. Another would be to work on changing 1267 Committee procedures, so that they don’t allow one country to hold back such important terror listings without due cause. A third may even be to open dialogues with both China and Pakistan bilaterally on the issue, leveraging Pakistan’s need to be removed from the FATF grey list later this year as well as China’s interest in Pakistan’s economic recovery, to ensure the listings are accomplished. Eventually, if the goal behind the UNSC listings is to ensure that perpetrators of terrorist acts are held accountable, the emphasis must be on working through all avenues.

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