

India-ASEAN ties can benefit region: China

Hua Chunying

China on Thursday cautiously welcomed India's invitation extended to the heads of ASEAN and offered Beijing's "constructive" participation for promoting the overall development of the region.

Rejecting a zero-sum approach, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said "China is open to all countries developing friendly relations." She added: "So, we are okay with India developing friendly and cooperative relations with ASEAN countries."

Rejecting the notion that the New Delhi meeting was meant to send a message to Beijing of India's growing political clout in China's backyard, Ms. Hua said: "We hope all countries can work together for peace, stability and development of the region. We can all play a constructive role."

China's ties with ASEAN have been on the upswing with trade expected to reach \$1 trillion by 2020. India's trade with ASEAN in 2016-17 stood at \$70 billion, Xinhua reported.

"China and India share a lot of common interests. China would like to enhance coordination and cooperation with all countries including India to steer the economic globalisation towards benefiting world economic growth and well-being of all countries," Ms. Hua had earlier said.

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