

Modi, Xi reaffirm promise of peace

PM Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the BRICS summit.AFP

India and China held talks on Thursday on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg, to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said in a statement that Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi also discussed plans to hold multiple, high level meetings during the rest of the year.

“Both leaders have reaffirmed once again their readiness to give the necessary directions to their militaries to enhance communications between them and to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas,” said Mr. Gokhale in a statement to the media at the end of the bilateral meeting, which he described as “very productive”.

The Indian statement closely resembles the understanding reached at the informal summit in Wuhan in April, where both the leaders had “directed” their militaries to execute “confidence-building measures”.

The official said both sides firmed up a round of defence and security related talks in August. The talks would be held in the backdrop of the first anniversary of the Doklam standoff.

“Chinese Ministers of Defence and Public Security will visit India this year and these two visits will take place in August and October respectively. The high level people-to-people mechanism to be established between two sides and which will be headed by the External Affairs Minister on the Indian side and the State Counsellor and Foreign Minister on the Chinese side, will also be in this year, most likely in October in India,” said Mr. Gokhale.

Mr. Modi conveyed to the Chinese leadership about India’s plans to send National Security Advisor Ajit Doval for the Special Representative talks in Beijing to be held later this year.

The discussion also included possibilities of export of urea among other items from India to China. The official said an Indian trade delegation will travel to China during August 1-2 to explore export possibilities for soya, non-Basmati rice and pharmaceutical products.

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