

AVOID MISCALCULATION, SAYS CHINA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

China on Friday warned India against making “a strategic miscalculation with regard to China”, in a sharp reaction to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s surprise visit to Ladakh to meet Indian troops.

China also described Mr. Modi’s comments on “expansionism” as being “exaggerated and fabricated”, underlying the tense state of relations. “China has demarcated boundary with 12 of its 14 neighbouring countries through peaceful negotiations, turning land borders into bonds of friendly cooperation. It’s groundless to view China as ‘expansionist’, exaggerate & fabricate its disputes with neighbours,” Ji Rong, the spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi, said on Twitter.

Against ‘complication’

In Beijing, the Chinese Foreign Ministry reacted to Mr. Modi’s visit by saying India should not “complicate” the situation along the border. “China and India are in communication with each other through military and diplomatic channels,” Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said at a daily press briefing, when asked about the visit. “Neither side should make any move that may complicate the border situation.”

Mr. Zhao warned India to “avoid a strategic miscalculation with regard to China”.

“I would like to stress that China hopes that India will work with us, follow faithfully the important consensus reached between the two leaders, abide by the agreements reached between the two governments, strengthen communication and coordination on properly managing the current situation through diplomatic and military channels, and jointly uphold peace and stability in the border areas,” he said.

“At the same time, we need to see that China and India, both major developing countries, bear the historic mission of accelerating national development and rejuvenation,” the official said. “China and India should follow the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries and uphold overall bilateral relations,” he said.

Mr. Lijian also warned against “artificial barriers” that would hurt economic relations, in reference to India’s recent moves on the trade and investment front, from banning 59 Chinese apps to announcing a halt to highway projects.

On Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari’s remarks on July 1 to keep Chinese firms away from highway projects, Mr. Zhao said: “In recent days some politicians in India have kept issuing irresponsible remarks that are detrimental to China-India relations. It calls for concerted efforts on both sides to maintain China-India relations. Artificially setting up barriers for such cooperation not only violates WTO rules, but also hurts India’s interests.”

He said China would “take all necessary measures to safeguard the legitimate rights of Chinese businesses”.

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