

India asserts itself in China's backyard

The explanation of India's post-Doklam international image acquires significance in view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's one-on-one meeting with Premier Li Keqiang that was held on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit on Tuesday.

Following the meeting the MEA spokesperson took to social media to announce that the meeting signified, "two neighbours in deep conversation."

Elaborating on the counter-China angle, the high-level official said the Southeast Asian region had been facing uncertainties following the exit of President Barack Obama as he took visible interest in the region.

However, the latest visits by the leaders of the quadrilateral countries, including by the new U.S. President Donald Trump have once again assured support to these countries as they face China's commercial and military domination.

In this context, he said the fundamental change in India's foreign affairs is in its embrace of the big ticket issues of East Asia like the North Korean nuclear crisis as well.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared concerns of DPRK's pursuit of missiles and nuclear weapons and called for complete verification and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. He also said that North Korea's proliferation links must be investigated and the parties who have supported these unlawful programmes must be made accountable," Preeti Saran, Secretary in charge of eastern ties in the Ministry of External Affairs said at a media briefing explaining India's position.

The anonymous Indian official said that taking up of North Korean threats was part of a new Indian set of concerns that also covers major global issues like terrorism by the Islamic State and its capability to inflict mass casualties, and tensions in the South China Sea that concern the world as well as India.

"The North Korean nuclear missiles are not just problematic for the U.S., but for the entire world, including us, as Pyongyang's missiles are capable of hitting targets in different parts of the world," said the diplomat.

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