

High-level talks between China and India take place for the first time in two years; focus on Ladakh standoff

Description

CHINA/INDIA: On Friday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar just a day after his trip to Kabul.

Reportedly, a key topic of discussion was the dispute over eastern Ladakh, as well as the geopolitical implications of the crisis in Ukraine.

This is the highest-level visit between the two countries, which follow two years of strained ties following the military standoff in eastern Ladakh.

According to reports, the border issue played a prominent role in the meeting between Wang and Doval, since the two have been serving as Special Representatives (SR) for the boundary talks between the two countries.

An atmosphere of cordial discussion prevailed during the talks.

In the discussion, several significant points were made, including the necessity of disengaging early and completely in the remaining areas and removing impediments to allow the bilateral relationship to develop naturally.

The two sides also emphasized the need for the continuation of positive interactions at the diplomatic and military levels to restore peace and tranquillity, which they said is a prerequisite for normalisation.

It was agreed that continuing with the present situation was not in the mutual interest of both countries and that bringing back peace and tranquillity will help to build mutual trust and create an enabling environment for relations to progress.

The two sides have agreed that working in the same direction and resolving outstanding issues as quickly as possible, ensuring that actions do not violate the spirit of equality and mutual security is in the best interest of both countries.

To carry the forward mandate of the SRs, the Chinese side has invited NSA Doval to visit China. Responding positively to the invitation, the NSA declared he would be able to visit if the immediate issues could be resolved

High-level talks have been taking place between India and China on resolving friction points in eastern Ladakh. Following the talks, both sides have already withdrawn troops from some of the friction points.

The 15th round of high-level military dialogue between India and China took place on March 11 to resolve the pending issues in the eastern Ladakh region. However, there was no advancement in the negotiations to resolve the remaining issues.

The Indian-Chinese border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake region.

After the clashes in Galwan Valley on June 15, 2020, the conflict escalated further. The clashes claimed the lives of 20 Indian soldiers and an unspecified number of Chinese soldiers.

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At present, each side has approximately 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector.

Wang is scheduled to meet his Indian counterpart S Jaishankar after his talks with Doval.

Wang's visit to Delhi is part of his South Asia tour, which took him to Kabul and Pakistan, where he raked up the Jammu and Kashmir issue.

After Delhi, Wang will travel to Nepal from Friday through Sunday.

(With inputs from agencies)

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