

China advises India to hold talks on differences over CPEC

ISLAMABAD: China has advised India to have summit level talks with it keeping differences on the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project aside.

Beijing said on Friday that it was ready to hold a Wuhan-style summit meeting with India this year to improve ties, notwithstanding the differences over the trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative in which the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a flagship project.

Addressing media in Beijing ahead of the Belt and Road Forum (BRF) being held from April 25-27 to showcase China's trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi asked India to shed its opposition to the US\$60 billion CPEC, saying it no way "undermined" the basic position on the Kashmir dispute.

Asked if India's opposition to the BRI would undermine the new momentum generated by last year's informal summit between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Wang said the two leaders had a very successful meeting at Wuhan city.

"Particularly they have established mutual trust between the leadership and they jointly planned for the future of improvement and strengthening of China-India relations.

"After the Wuhan summit, we see all areas of progress between the two countries and we have bright prospect for this relationship. We are now preparing for the next summit of our leaders," he said without specifying any time line. After the Wuhan summit hosted by China, the second summit will be held by India. President Xi plans to visit India for the 2nd informal summit after the general elections in India, currently underway, are over.

Wang said so far 37 heads of state and governments had confirmed their participation in the BRF. Representatives from over 150 countries organisations' close to 5000 participants have confirmed their participation. Leaders of Pakistan and Nepal are among the countries who would take part in the meeting.

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