



China welcomes Modi's 'positive' statement on Indo-China ties

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BEIJING: China has welcomed as "positive" Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks at a Singapore forum that India-China cooperation is good for the world's future.

Delivering the keynote address at the 17th Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Modi called bilateral ties as layered, and said he firmly believed that Asia and world will have a "better future if India and China work together with trust and confidence, keeping in mind each other's interests".

A top Chinese general who led Beijing's delegation to the forum called it a "positive" assessment of ties between the two countries. "Modi gave a positive assessment of China-Indian relations in his speech," lieutenant general He Lei told state media.

It was also noticed in Beijing that Modi avoided any mention of the Quad — comprising US, Japan, Australia and India — in his speech and instead spoke out against trade protectionism in a not-so-veiled reference to the US.

Modi's statement and the Chinese response comes a week before the PM is set to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Qingdao where he is also set for a meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The exchange of positive statements ahead of the SCO summit continues to mark the turnaround in bilateral ties after they were strained during the Doklam standoff last year.

Chinese academics said Modi's speech was a positive movement in ties, but added that the PM could be sending positive signals to ensure he attracts more votes.

"Modi's remarks sent a signal of goodwill toward improving China-India ties, which had been soured by a military standoff last year," Hu Zhiyong, a research fellow at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of International Relations, told the Global Times, a state-controlled tabloid with ties to People's Daily, the mouthpiece of the Communist Party of China.