

Chinese defence minister to visit India

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CHINESE Defence Minister Wei Fenghe has accepted an invitation to visit India and plans to do so by the end of this year, China said on Thursday, as a rapprochement between the neighbours gathers pace. PM Narendra Modi and Chinese president Xi Jinping agreed in April to open a new chapter in ties, just months after the Doklam dispute that rekindled fears of war.

Chinese Defence ministry spokesman Ren Guoqiang told a monthly news briefing that both countries were currently in communication about Wei's visit, but gave no other details. Ren added that Major General Liu Xiaowu, deputy commander of China's western military region, had also visited India from July 2-6, for meetings with his Indian counterparts. During his trip, both countries reached a consensus on improving front line risk management, the need to maintain peace and stability along the border and strengthening of exchanges between their forces. Early this week, Chinese Vice-Foreign minister Kong Xuanyou was in Bhutan underlining that Beijing and Thimphu are also bringing ties back on track.