

## China furious at Narendra Modi's Arunachal Pradesh visit

Sutirtho Patranobis, Hindustan Times, Beijing | Updated: Feb 20, 2015 19:45 IST

China on Friday reacted angrily to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Arunachal Pradesh, making it known that Beijing thought that the move went against attempts by both countries to resolve the festering border dispute.

China's reaction to Indian leaders visiting Arunachal – which it claims as South Tibet – in the past has been quick and sharp; Friday wasn't an exception.

Foreign ministry officials took time out from the week-long Chinese New Year holiday to issue a statement, condemning Modi's whirlwind visit to the northeastern state in strong words.

The statement said that the Chinese government has never recognised "the so-called Arunachal Pradesh" and that it was "strongly opposed" to the visit.

It said there was "huge controversy" in the eastern border region between the two countries.

"China on Friday lodged strong representation with India to express diametrical opposition to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to a disputed zone along the China-India borders," ministry spokesperson, Hua Chunying said.

"...the act of the Indian side is not conducive to properly resolving and controlling disputes between the two sides, nor in conformity with the general situation of growth of bilateral relations," Hua added.

The statement added: "The so-called 'Arunachal Pradesh' was established largely on the three areas of China's Tibet -- Monyul, Loyul and Lower Tsayul currently under Indian illegal occupation. These three areas, located between the illegal 'McMahon Line' and the traditional customary boundary between China and India, have always been Chinese territory."

"We demand the Indian side to pay attention to the strong concern of the Chinese side," Hua said.

"We demand the Indian side not to take any action that may complicate the border issue before its resolution so as to maintain the sound momentum in the growth of bilateral relations," Hua said.

The official news agency, Xinhua reported: "In 1914, the colonialists secretly contrived the illegal 'McMahon Line' in an attempt to incorporate into India the above-mentioned three areas of Chinese territory. None of the successive Chinese governments have ever recognized this line. In February 1987, Indian authorities declared the founding of the so-called 'Arunachal Pradesh.'"

China's reaction had been equally vitriolic when top leaders including President Pranab Mukherjee, former President Pratibha Patil and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had visited the state.