

China outbids India for stake in DSE

Bangladesh has agreed to sell a large stake in its stock exchange to a Chinese consortium rebuffing a rival bid from India that raised political sensitivities.

India's NSE had offered 15 taka (\$0.18) per share during the tender process.

China's Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges made a joint higher bid of 22 taka per share, or \$122 million, and offered additional technical support worth nearly \$37 million.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has made big investments in Bangladesh and Indian companies have won multi-billion contracts in key sectors in recent years.

But increasingly it must counter China, which has also courted India's arch-rival Pakistan and strategic Indian Ocean nations including Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

'China deploys warships in Indian Ocean'

A Chinese naval contingent has been deployed in the East Indian Ocean for more than a week.

This is at a time when the Maldives is undergoing a political crisis according to a Chinese website sina.com.cn.

Chinese Navy's 'Blue 2018A' fleet has been training in the East Indian Ocean for a "week or so".

However, Indian defence sources denied any movement of Chinese ships near the Indian Ocean island nation.

China had earlier warned against external intervention in the Maldives after the country's exiled former President Mohamed Nasheed called for New Delhi's intervention to release political prisoners.

The detachment of the Chinese Navy comprises two 052D destroyers, a 054A frigate, and a 071 dock landing ship. A supply ship is also part of the flotilla.

An Australian website, news.com.au, underscored that the entry of Chinese warships in the Indian Ocean marks a significant shift in regional power.

More ships

The post highlighted that two additional naval groups, already deployed for anti-piracy escort missions of commercial ships, beef up the Navy's overall deployment in the Indian Ocean at this time.

Not near Maldives

Indian defence sources said no movement of Chinese ships was detected near the Maldivian waters.

A couple of weeks back, a Chinese naval task force has entered the Indian Ocean from the Sunda Strait for exercises in international waters closer to Australia and has since left via the Lombok Strait, the source explained.

China holding talks with Baloch militants'

According to a report by The Financial Times, China has been quietly holding talks with Baloch militants in Pakistan's Baluchistan Province for over five years to protect its \$60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative.

For more than half a century, Beijing has maintained a policy of non-interference in the domestic politics of other countries. But that has been tested by its desire to protect the billions of dollars it is investing around the world under its 'Belt and Road Initiative'.

China's willingness to get involved in Pakistani politics has fuelled concerns in New Delhi, which is worried about China's growing political influence in neighbouring countries, including Nepal, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, the report said.

Pak. welcomes move

Pakistani officials have welcomed the talks between Baloch rebels and Chinese envoys.

The recent decision by the U.S. to suspend security assistance to Pakistan had convinced many in Islamabad that Beijing was a more genuine partner.