

China's Block on UN Action - Masood Azhar as Global Terrorist

Why in news?

China for the fourth time blocked a bid to designate Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar as a “global terrorist” at the UN Security Council (UNSC).

What was India's proposal?

- From 2016 to 2018, India's proposals to list Azhar, with evidence of JeM involvement in the Pathankot airbase attack, were foiled by China. Click [here](#) to know more.
- It placed technical holds on the listing, and then vetoed it.
- The vetoes came despite the fact that the JeM is banned, and in the UNSC listing it is noted that Azhar, as its leader and founder, accepted funds from Osama bin Laden.
- China is well aware of the evidence against him, but is not ready to withdraw its objections. Click [here](#) to know more on the reasons.
- India-China relations have improved after the [Wuhan summit](#) in April 2018.
- Despite this, China is unwilling to align itself with India on its concerns on cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

What were India's post-Pulwama efforts?

- After the [Pulwama attack](#), claimed by the JeM, the government had made the listing of Azhar a focus in its diplomatic efforts.
- It reached out to several governments, and shared a report on Azhar with each member of the Security Council.
- All of them are members of the 1267 ISIL and al-Qaeda sanctions committee.
- A special effort was made with Beijing too which has been blocking the Azhar listing in the past.

What is China's present move?

- The proposal to designate Azhar under the 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee of the UNSC was moved by France, the UK and the US.
- This came after a suicide bomber of the JeM killed 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama.

- The Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee members had 10 working days to raise any objections to the proposal.
- Just before the no-objection period deadline, China put a “technical hold” on the proposal.
- Reportedly, China asked for “more time to examine” the proposal.
- The technical hold is valid for up to 6 months and it can be again extended by up to 3 months.

What is the implication?

- China’s stand is regrettable and condemnable, and it has been consistent on this issue.
- This is both a setback to India’s post-Pulwama diplomatic strategy and a reality check on ties with China at present.
- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi expressed disappointment over China's decision.
- India will continue to pursue all available avenues to ensure that terrorists involved in attacks on Indian citizens are brought to justice.

What lies ahead for India?

- India must now consider confronting China to persuade it to change its stand by means of incentives or coercion.
- But any kind of concerted international pressure from the Western countries in this regard has in the past only served to be counterproductive.
- It is also unlikely that cutting imports from China and other punitive actions will yield much.
- So India may be more successful if it identifies the incentives it can offer China in the next few months to review its position.
- While some of those incentives would be bilateral, “triangular” talks including Islamabad is indicative of China’s thinking.
- India should also take note of the larger issue of ensuring that Pakistan takes substantive action against Azhar, the JeM and other terror groups that are threatening India.

Source: Business Line, The Hindu