

India made sacrifice to implement Iranian sanctions: US

08/08/2015 16:32 by admin

Washington: Reiterating that India and its people "made significant sacrifice" at the cost of their economy to implement the US-led international sanctions against Iran, Washington today said that there is "no credible basis" for New Delhi to join another set of sanctions against Tehran if the Iranian nuclear deal falls to pass Congress.

President Barack Obama had specifically sent his then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to convince India to join the US-led international sanctions against Iraq.

Following this, New Delhi took steps to reduce its import of oil from Iran that had considerable impact on the Indian economy, a fact acknowledged by the White House.

"You will recall that when these sanctions originally were put in place three or four years ago that the United States travelled around the world, including to India, sat down with the Indian government, and asked them to curtail the amount of Iranian oil that they imported into the country, and we acknowledged, in the context of those discussions, that this would be an economic sacrifice that the people of India and that the economy of India would have to make," White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said.

"But Indian leaders agreed to it by saying that this is something that we're willing to do if it can advance our effort to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon through diplomacy.

"In essence, that was the agreement that countries like India had agreed that they would take these steps, even at their own expense, to try to reach this broader international agreement," he said.

"The good news is that that agreement has been reached, and it is an agreement that is supported by the international community, 99 per cent of the world, as the president has described it, and that's why it would be so damaging to the standing of the United States for the Congress to act unilaterally to kill this deal," he noted.

"No longer would countries like India, who have been making a substantial sacrifice over the years, have any interest or incentive to continue to enforce those sanction against Iran.

"There's no basis, there's no credible claim for why they would be willing to do that, and there's no denying the significant negative impact on the US' credibility for the United States to be isolated in this way," Earnest said.

"That's why the President has said if Congress were to move forward to kill this deal, or kill this agreement, it would, in fact yield a better deal for Iran, because what we would see is that Iran would get sanctions relief, they would have the ability to sell oil to India and get the proceeds of doing so, without having to reduce their nuclear stockpile by 98 per cent, without having to put 13,000 centrifuges in storage, without having to gut their heavy water plutonium reactor, and without having to submit to the most intrusive set of inspections that have ever been imposed on a country's nuclear programme," he said.

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