

India can work its own way through Iran accord: US

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Washington: With the Republican controlled US Congress failing to scuttle the landmark Iran nuclear deal, the US said it was up to India how to work its way through the accord which "is truly an international architecture."

"Each nation has, obviously, sovereign rights to impose sanctions on their own," State Department spokesman John Kirby told reporters Friday when asked how long the sanctions regime that obliged India to cut down its oil imports would continue.

"The unilateral US sanctions against Iran's nefarious activities will remain in place, and we'll continually review those as we go forward," he said.

"It wouldn't be appropriate for us to tell India how to work their way through this, but we do believe that the architecture of the Iran deal is truly an international architecture," Kirby said.

"This was many countries coming together to try to make sure that Iran never possess a nuclear weapon, and the deal does that," he said.

"The sanctions that we're talking about as part of the Iran deal are UN sanctions that were always meant to drive Iran to the negotiating table. So they worked in that regard," Kirby said.

There's no new sanctions relief under the agreement until "Iran has completed the necessary steps that it needs to complete with the IAEA to verify the status of their nuclear programme and that it's peaceful," he said.

The US was "grateful for what's happened this week in Congress," Kirby said. "It looks like it's going to be moving forward, and pretty soon ... we'll have to turn our task to implementation."

Kirby said he didn't know of any request that was made by the US to ask India to cut its oil from Iran. "I'll have to check on that."

Meanwhile, a day after the Senate secured the Iran nuclear deal, blocking a Republican resolution to scuttle it, the House pressed forward with a pair of symbolic votes designed to show a majority of the chamber disapproves of the agreement.

A bill approving of the nuclear deal was resoundingly defeated, with 25 Democrats joining House Republicans in expressing opposition to the pact.

On a second vote largely along party lines, the House passed a non-binding legislation stating that the President could not unilaterally lift statutory sanctions. The vote was 247 to 186, with two Democrats voting with Republicans. The fresh House votes can't prevent the administration from starting to implement the agreement later this month.

President Barack Obama released a statement after the House votes stressing that the vast majority of House Democrats went on record supporting the deal.

Obama said he was gratified that the lawmakers who "have taken care to judge the deal on the merits are joining our allies and partners around the world in taking steps that will allow for the implementation of this long-term,

comprehensive deal."

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