

Nuclear weapons meant to deal with India: Pakistan

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Washington: Pakistan has made low-yield nuclear weapons to bridge the gap for war that India had created through its cold-start doctrine, Foreign Secretary Aizaz Chaudhry said on Tuesday.

This is the first concrete explanation from a senior Pakistani official on how Islamabad plans to deal with New Delhi's so-called cold-start doctrine, now renamed the proactive strategy, Dawn reported.

It also is a rare confession of Pakistan's decision to make tactical nuclear weapons to deal with the possible threat of an Indian aggression.

Briefing the Pakistani media on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Washington, Chaudhry said Pakistan would not sign any nuclear deal with the US during Sharif's visit.

Sharif arrives in Washington on Wednesday for a meeting with US President Barack Obama, scheduled for October 22.

"Our nuclear programme is one dimensional: stopping Indian aggression before it happens. It is not for starting a war. It is for deterrence," the foreign secretary said.

Explaining India's cold-start doctrine, Chaudhry said under this strategy India had already moved its cantonments close to the Pakistani border. This allowed India also to move its conventional weapons close to Pakistan along with other vehicles and fuel supplies.

By drastically reducing the time required to launch an aggression against Pakistan, India had "created a space for war," Chaudhry said.

He explained that Pakistan's "low-yield, tactical nuclear weapons" would make it difficult for India to launch a war against Pakistan while remaining under the nuclear threshold.

In reply to a question about Pakistan joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the foreign secretary said the US policy of getting India included in this group was "discriminatory".

"We encourage the US to have a non-discriminatory approach, a balanced approach," he said.

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