

Pak 'deceitful', do not ink nuke deal: US lawmaker to Obama

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Washington: Asserting that Pakistan has repeatedly proven itself to be "deceptive and deceitful", a top American lawmaker, who heads a Congressional subcommittee on terrorism and non-proliferation, has urged the US President not to ink any kind of civil nuclear deal with Islamabad.

"Simply put, Pakistan's current and past record is disqualifying for any consideration by the US to support civilian nuclear cooperation with Pakistan bilaterally or in any relevant multilateral forum," Congressman Ted Poe said on Tuesday in a letter to Obama.

Poe, who is chairman of the subcommittee on terrorism, non-proliferation and trade, in his letter urged Obama to not engage in any negotiations regarding a US-Pak civilian nuclear agreement.

"Pakistan has repeatedly proven itself to be deceptive and deceitful," he alleged. "Not only does this country continue to harbor terrorist groups that attack US troops and interests in Afghanistan, they have yet to come clean about previous nuclear dealings with countries like Iran," he charged.

"I've long called for an end to military aid to this nation that just takes our money and uses it against our interests. Supporting a civilian nuclear agreement with Pakistan - a Benedict Arnold ally of the US - while the Pakistani government continues to demonstrate it cannot be trusted would be irresponsible and dangerous," Poe said.

In his letter Poe expressed strong concern about reports that the US is engaged in policy discussions, and possible bilateral negotiations, with Pakistan related to its nuclear program which may include US support for a US-Pakistan civilian nuclear agreement, relaxation of Nuclear Suppliers Group export controls and possibly also NSG membership.

As the chairman of the subcommittee on the house foreign affairs committee responsible for non-proliferation issues, he requested that a briefing on this issue be arranged for him as soon as possible.

One of the vital US national security interests is to ensure that Pakistan has a safe and secure nuclear arsenal and infrastructure. Constraining Pakistan's nuclear weapons program and its development and its ability to threaten India and other countries is also a key US objective, he said.

"However, as you well know, Pakistan's nuclear program has been built through the theft of technology, deception, and clandestine international cooperation. Its record of unabated nuclear proliferation, first as a recipient and then as an active proliferator of nuclear know-how and technology to Iran, Libya, and North Korea, is long and well-documented," the lawmaker said.

"If you consider the US-Indian civilian nuclear cooperation, the contrast cannot be starker," Poe told the President.

"India had no record of nuclear-related proliferation. Pakistan has yet to come clean on its nuclear (and missile) dealings with China, North Korea, Iran and Libya. India did not try to cover up or grandfather nuclear cooperation with other countries - because there was none. Pakistan continues its efforts to grandfather reactor deals with China. India committed to a separation of its military and civilian programs, while Pakistan has not," Poe said.

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