

US rules out India-type nuclear agreement with Pakistan

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Washington: The Obama Administration on Wednesday ruled out any India-type nuclear agreement with Pakistan as top American lawmakers expressed serious concerns over Pakistan's growing nuclear arsenal.

"We are not negotiating a 123 agreement with Pakistan," Richard Golson, Special US Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, told lawmakers during a hearing on Pakistan convened by the powerful House Foreign Affairs Committee.

"We had a very candid discussion with Pakistan about some of the concerns that we have including about short range nuclear weapons. Pakistan is prepared to have discussions with us," he said in response to a question.

Olson said Pakistan is well aware of the extremist and insurgent threats to the security of its nuclear weapons and has a professional and dedicated security force.

"As with all nuclear-capable states, we have urged Pakistan to restrain its nuclear weapons and missile development and stressed the importance of avoiding any developments that might invite increased risk to nuclear safety, security, or strategic stability," he said.

Congressman Ed Royce, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in his remarks alleged that Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is on a track to be the third largest.

"It's addition of small tactical nuclear weapons in recent years is even more troubling. This is a country which spends a fifth of its budget on the military, from long-range missiles to F-16s, but under 2.5 per cent on education," he said.

"Through all of the double-dealing, US policy has essentially stood still. Security assistance, cash, and arms has continued to flow under the occasional temporary delays," Royce said.

"Indeed, despite some Department of Defence assistance for Pakistan being held because of inadequate efforts against the Haqqani network, the State Department is currently seeking more arms for Islamabad," Royce said.

"We have a very stringent end use monitoring requirements with security co-operation with high tech. The results have been satisfactory. The end use monitoring systems have been effective," Olson said in response to a question.

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