

Defence relationship with India on excellent path: Pentagon

04/01/2017 22:20 by admin

Washington: The Pentagon has said that the Indo-US defence relationship is on an excellent path and will continue to be so in the next administration and beyond.

File pic - Defence Secretary Ashton Carter and Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar

Pentagon statements came days ahead of President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration. Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook said that Defence Secretary Ashton Carter's commitment to India-US defence relationship is clear.

"The (Defence) secretary's (Ashton Carter's) commitment to this (India-US) is clear. We think the defence relationship with India is on an excellent path and will continue to be so in the next administration and beyond," Peter Cook said here on Tuesday.

Known as a friend of India and strong believer in a robust India-US defence relationship, Carter is the only American defence secretary to have so many trips to India and included New Delhi in his farewell overseas trip as well.

In his previous capacity, Carter was instrumental in the path-breaking India US Defence Technology and Transfer Initiative (DTTI), under which the two countries have started several joint development and co-production projects.

"Our relationship with India, you've seen the commitment made by this department and this Secretary of Defence and this administration to improving our defence relationship with India," Cook said.

Responding to a question on restrictions on technology transfer to India due to the outdated arms control act of the US, Cook said obviously there are several aspects to it.

"There are limits on what we can do in terms of technology -- the export of technology to India or any other country," he said.

"And we'll continue to abide by the law and to work with India in places where we can, where it's appropriate for that kind of -- for specific technology to be exported. Again, not just to India but to any country, but we're gonna follow the law," Cook said.

Last month, outgoing President Barack Obama had signed the National Defence Authorisation Act, 2017, which entails steps needed to recognise India as a "major defence partner" of US. It also sanctions a USD 618 billion (Rs 41 lakh crore approximately) US defence budget for 2017, reported PTI.

- IT