

US asks India, Pakistan to cool down after cross border operation in Myanmar

13/06/2015 13:11 by admin

Washington: While declining comment on India's surgical strike on militants in Myanmar, the US has asked India and Pakistan to take steps to reduce tensions and move toward resuming dialogue.

"I don't have a comment on that specific operation," US State Department spokesman Jeff Rathke told reporters Friday when asked if the US supported or was concerned over India's cross border strike in Myanmar, a move that has raised hackles in Pakistan.

But "we encourage India and Pakistan to take steps to reduce tensions and to move towards resuming talks," he said.

"The relationship between India and Pakistan is critical to advancing peace and stability in South Asia, so we welcome any steps India and Pakistan can take to reduce tensions and move toward resuming dialogue," Rathke said.

"We encourage India and Pakistan to take those kinds of steps, and we believe that India and Pakistan each have a mutual interest in addressing the threat posed by violent extremism and terrorism," he said.

Asked if the US had reached out officially to India or Pakistan to defuse tensions over the Myanmar strike, Rathke said: "Well, we've encouraged a reduction of tensions on both sides at high levels, so that's something we've mentioned."

The spokesman also expressed concern over Pakistan's crackdown on Save the Children organisation.

Rathke could not say whether the issue had been discussed in Islamabad, "but it's certainly a matter of concern to us."

"Save the Children is an international nongovernment organization. They do important work," he said.

Rathke also did not have an update on expression of similar concern over India blacklisting some NGOs a few weeks ago.

"We expressed our concerns and we've raised those with the Indian authorities. I don't have an update to offer here."

Earlier in a press statement, Department Spokesperson John Kirby said the US was "concerned about Pakistan's crackdown on international charitable organizations and other NGOs."