

US advocates improvement in India-Pakistan ties

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Washington: For the fourth time in a row, the US State Department commented on the current tensions between India and Pakistan, urging them to improve relations over the range of issues.

Pakistani Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani welcomed this, saying that the US was playing a positive role in reducing tensions between the two South Asian neighbours, Dawn reported.

At the State Department, spokesperson John Kirby said the US desired that relations between the two countries continue to improve over a range of issues.

On Tuesday, US Secretary of State John Kerry also stressed the need for reducing tensions between the two neighbours.

Earlier this week, another State Department official, Jeff Rathke, urged India and Pakistan to take steps to reduce tensions and to move towards resuming talks.

Alarmed by the recent spate of threats and counter-threats between Pakistan and India, Secretary Kerry telephoned Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday and later told a briefing in Washington that he had a positive and frank conversation with the Pakistani leader.

Sharif had just finished a conversation himself with the prime minister of India when he called him, Kerry said.

The (Pakistani) prime minister was extremely forthcoming. He could not have been more direct, he said.

Secretary Kerry said the tension was a cause of enormous concern to all of us for all the obvious reasons.

Another State Department official told reporters that Washington was in touch with India as well as at the highest level.

- IANS