

## **Hopeful US can reach 'verifiable deal' with Iran: Hillary Clinton**

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**Glen (New Hampshire):** Hillary Rodham Clinton has said that she remains hopeful the US can reach a "strong verifiable deal" to curb Iran's nuclear weapons program by next week's deadline.

The Democratic presidential front-runner said yesterday during a Fourth of July campaign organising event at a house party in Glen in northern New Hampshire that she hopes the US and its allies can clinch a deal.

"I'm hoping it's a strong, verifiable deal that will put the lid on Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions," Clinton said.

"Even if we are successful, however, Iran's aggressiveness will not end."

As President Barack Obama's secretary of state, Clinton helped set in motion the talks that are nearing completion in Vienna. The proposal has been assailed by Republican presidential candidates who say it does not go far enough to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, setting up a potential foreign policy clash in the election campaign.

Clinton said Iran ramped up its nuclear capabilities during President George W Bush's two terms, building covert facilities and intimidating its neighbours. "The Bush administration's response through diplomacy was somewhat half-hearted," Clinton said, adding the "only response" was levelling punitive sanctions on Iran.

Once Obama entered the White House, "we inherited an Iranian nuclear weapons program and we had to figure out what we were going to do about it," Clinton said. An agreement, however, would not be a cure-all, she said.

"Just because we get the nuclear deal, if we can get it done, doesn't mean we're going to be able to be breathing a big sigh of relief," Clinton said.

Clinton later marched in a parade in Gorham in northern New Hampshire. The northeastern state traditionally holds the first presidential primary. Recent polls show Clinton with a narrower than expected lead over Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders in the Democratic race..

When one woman asked her about Obama's health care overhaul, Clinton said she would embrace it. "I'm going to not only defend it, I'm going to make it even better," she said.

During the house party in Glen, Clinton also spoke about her ideas to address college debt, her views of the Supreme Court's gay marriage ruling and the future makeup of the court, during an hour-long event with supporters.

- AP