

US ignoring facts on India's NSG bid: China reacts to Tom Shannon's remarks

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Beijing: Reacting sharply to the remarks by Tom Shannon, US Under Secretary for Political Affairs, that India failed to get entry into Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) due to China-led opposition, Beijing today said that the United States was ignoring facts in this matter.

Hong Lei

China pointed out that the plenary meeting of the elite grouping in Seoul did not discuss the accession of any specific country.

China's assertion came in response to the remarks by US Under Secretary for Political Affairs Tom Shannon that India failed to get entry into Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) due to China-led opposition.

Shannon had said one country can break consensus in the 48-nation atomic trading bloc and insisted that such member should be held accountable.

"With regard to the US officials comments on the NSG we want to point out that this official shows no regard to facts," Chinese Foreign Ministry official Hong Lei told a media briefing.

"In the plenary meeting in Seoul India' accession was not on the agenda of the meeting. It did not discuss the accession of any specific country into the group," Hong said.

"The news release of the plenary meeting said meeting discussed the technical, legal and political questions concerning the accession of relevant countries," he said.

On Shannon's comment that China's motives in the South China Sea (SCS) was intended towards Indian Ocean, Hong said "we are strongly dissatisfied with that" remark.

Shannon had said, "What China is doing in the South China Sea is madness."

"China's intentions and positions on the SCS are very clear. First is to maintain our territorial sovereignty and maritime rights. Second, to resolve dispute through dialogue and consultation," Hong said.

"The remarks made by the US official tries to drive a wedge among the regional countries, confuse the right from the wrong and are extremely irresponsible," he said.

"We ask the US side to honour its commitments of not taking side on the SCS issue. Play a constructive role in the SCS not the opposite," he said.

- (With PTI inputs)