

US warns North Korea after missile launch, says 'all options on table'

05/04/2017 22:07 by admin

Reacting sharply to the missile test by North Korea, the United States today said that it is considering all options to tackle the threat posed by Pyongyang's repeated nuclear arms tests.

Representational Pic

A White House official said that the matter requires urgent attention as the the clock is very, very quickly running out.

"We would have loved to see North Korea join the community of nations. They've been given that opportunity over the course of different dialogues and offers over the course of four administrations, with some of our best diplomats and statesmen doing the best they could to bring about a resolution, the official said.

The testing of nuclear weapons by North Korea is expected to figure prominently in talks between the Trump and Jinping during their meeting, the official said on condition of anonymity.

"North Korea clearly is a matter of urgent interest for the president and the administration as a whole. The president has been pretty clear in messaging how important it is for China to coordinate with the United States, and for China to begin exerting its considerable economic leverage to bring about a peaceful resolution to that problem. It is going to come up in their discussions.

Somewhere on the order of just shy of 90 per cent of North Korea's external trade is with China. So, even though we hear sometimes that China's political influence may have diminished with North Korea, clearly its economic leverage has not. It is considerable," the official said.

The US will be monitoring how well partners, including China, implement the UN resolutions with regard to North Korea.

"Coal is one very important area, given the volume of trade and what that means in terms of hard currency to the North Korean regime. And certainly we'll use whatever methods we have to monitor compliance," the official said. "The US will always act to defend its homeland and allies from any threat, particularly the one posed by Kim Jong Un's regime with the kinds of terrible weapons that they're developing.

Earlier, confirming the missile launch, the US Pacific Command said that its systems "detected and tracked" what it assessed was a North Korean missile launch at 11:42 AM (Hawaii time) on April 4.

"The launch of a single ballistic missile occurred at a land-based facility near Sinpo," the Command said in a statement.

The missile was tracked until it landed in the Sea of Japan at 11:51 AM (Hawaii time).

"Initial assessments indicate the type of missile was a KN-15 medium range ballistic missile," it said. "North Korea launched yet another intermediate range ballistic missile. The United States has spoken enough about North Korea. We have no further comment," Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said in a statement.

The missile launch comes ahead of the crucial meeting between President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart

Xi Jinping in Florida tomorrow during which the two leaders are expected to discuss a range of global issues, including North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

- (With PTI inputs)