

Iran softens stand, says it knows India's concerns

A day after threatening to cut special privileges for India, Iran on Wednesday toned down its rhetoric and said that it "understands" the challenges Delhi is facing on the energy front.

An official statement from the Embassy of Iran conveyed that Tehran has always welcomed Indian initiatives in the port of Chabahar and urged Delhi to fast-track investments in the connectivity project.

"India is a sovereign nation and taking into account many criteria including its friendly relations with supplier countries, market factors, geopolitical and geo-economical considerations and potentials and reliability of the oil suppliers, chooses its energy partners," the statement said.

Diplomats reach out

The Hindu had reported earlier that the Deputy Ambassador of Iran Massoud Rezvanian Rahaghi warned India of cutting privileges if Delhi replaced Iranian energy with supplies from other countries. He had also slammed India for being slow in investing in the Chabahar port project.

It is learnt that Indian diplomats reached out to their Iranian counterparts following the public statement which was made at an event which was also attended by the Ambassador of Venezuela, another major energy supplier to India.

However, on Wednesday, the press release said that India and Iran have a common approach to global and regional problems and emphasised India's contribution to the Chabahar port project. "...Iran has frequently emphasised on expediting Indian investment, and pushing Indian partner companies to accelerate their engagement in execution of the projects," the press release said, regarding the Indian role in Chabahar.

The statement attempted to portray cordial bilateral relations.

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