

## U.S. opposes Iran's 'destabilising' activities

Sushma Swaraj

Visiting U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said here on Wednesday that Washington does not intend to oppose Iran's business with India.

He was addressing a joint press conference with External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj.

"It's not our objective to harm the Iranian people nor is it our objective to interfere with legitimate business activities going on with other businesses in Europe, India or agreements that are in place to promote economic development," he said.

Mr. Tillerson said U.S. opposition to Iran was limited to Tehran's "destabilising activities" in the wider West Asian region and sought help from countries with ties with Iran to push it to stop its regional activities.

### Dialogue as a means

Ms. Swaraj also indicated that the U.S. may have to consider dialogue as a means of resolving the North Korean issue, and said, "India's trade relation with North Korea is minimal and the Indian embassy in Pyongyang is very small. But we do have an embassy. I have told Secretary Tillerson that some of your friendly countries should maintain embassies there so that some channels of communication remain open. On many occasions you may have to talk to them to resolve issues through dialogue so at least let one country that you consider friendly maintain its embassy. I think he has understood and appreciated our position to maintain our embassy in Pyongyang," the Minister said.

India and North Korea have maintained diplomatic offices in each other's capitals, though New Delhi recently banned trade of most goods with the country, except in food or medicine.

The discussions also covered the H1B visa issue and Ms. Swaraj noted that some bills pending with the U.S. Congress may harm the skilled professionals of India. "I have again raised the issue because in view of the close India-U.S. ties, skilled professionals of India expect that they should not be harmed," she said, explaining that India has engaged both the Congress and the White House to prevent any negative step on this issue.

***It's not our objective to harm the Iranian people or interfere with legitimate business*****Rex Tillerson**

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