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National

World will lose if deal fails: Kakodkar

India will be forced to adopt alternative energy options

Mumbai: As the fate of the India-United States nuclear deal remains uncertain, India said on Wednesday that if it did not go through, the international community would stand to lose because New Delhi would adopt alternative energy sources that might not be eco-friendly.

Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Chairman Anil Kakodkar emphasised that India had the potential to develop a strong indigenous nuclear technological base irrespective of the deal, aimed at allowing India access to atomic fuel and technology.

"It remains to be seen whether or not the Senate takes up during the lame-duck session next month the bill that entails change of U.S. laws to enable civil nuclear cooperation with India," he told PTI here.

The AEC Chairman said the proposed deal would only provide additional atomic power capacity, but India would continue to pioneer technology in the thrust areas.

After the U.S. Congress clears the deal, New Delhi will have to convince the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to change its guidelines to make an exception for India.

"We have to get the U.S. Congress [to] clear [the deal] and then the NSG to change the guidelines as per India's requirement and also relax the guidelines making an exception for India as a responsible nuclear weapons power," Mr. Kakodkar said.

The NSG guidelines prescribe that a country receiving nuclear technology should have full scope safeguards, under which the entire programme will be open to international scrutiny. "But this is not acceptable to India as we have our own strategic programme," he said, adding that it was a complex issue as many countries were involved. — PTI

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