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# **US shouldn't sell nuclear-armed version of F-16 to Pak: Republican leadership**

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WASHINGTON : With the Obama administration contemplating selling F-16 fighter jets to Pakistan, the top Republican leadership has expressed concern over it and said the US should not sell nuclear armed fighter jets to Pakistan..

"I think that (sale of F-16 to Pakistan) has to be reviewed carefully. I do not think that the nuclear armed version (of F-16) should be sold. That would exacerbate things," Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the US House of Representatives told Indian-Americans on the occasion **of launch of Republican Hindu Coalition..**

"Let's be clear, there is a direct tie between what happened in Paris and what happened several years ago in Paris. There is a common enemy, there is a common threat. And it is only appropriate that the world's largest democracy in numbers and world's largest democracy in military power should be natural allies, fighting on behalf of civilisation," the powerful Republican leader said..

Gingrich said it is important that the US does not accelerate any arms race in the region. "We should be very cautious. I am frankly very, very concerned about instability in the region and very, very concerned about the size of the Pakistani nuclear stockpile. We now live in a very dangerous world," he said.

The former House Speaker said there is "a global war underway between Islamists supremacist and the rest of the civilised world." The alliance between India and the US and the deep commitment by the two countries is very important to this, he said..

Senator Kelly Ayotte, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said it is important to address the challenge posed by radical Islamic terrorism. "We would continue to stand shoulder to shoulder to address this challenge facing us and the world," she said.

Responding to a question on sale of F-16 to Pakistan, Ayotte assured Indian-Americans that she would "carefully review" the proposal to sell F-16 to Pakistan. "I want to make sure that we are very careful about what we do," she said.

China, she said, poses another great challenge to the two countries. Both India and the United States believe that China should respect international law. China can't be allowed to bully its neighbours, she added.