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Modi salutes India's energy ties with Moscow in defiance of Trump tariffs

◆ Nations 'walk shoulder to shoulder' ◆ Putin hails trade links ◆ Xi forum bolsters China's profile

ANDRÉS SCHIPANI — DHAKA
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Narendra Modi has hailed his country's increasing energy ties with Russia at a meeting with Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of a showpiece summit in China, defying punitive tariffs levied on New Delhi by the US over its purchases of cheap Russian oil.

The Indian leader told his Russian counterpart that "even in the most difficult circumstances India and Russia have walked together, shoulder to shoulder. Our close co-operation is important not just to our two countries but for global peace, stability and prosperity."

India's foreign ministry said they discussed "bilateral co-operation, including in the economic, financial and energy sectors and expressed satisfaction with the sustained growth in bilateral ties in these areas".

US President Donald Trump last week doubled American tariffs on most Indian imports to 50 per cent, saying that the move was in response to New Delhi's purchases of discounted Russian oil since Putin ordered the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said Putin had spoken one-on-one with Modi for an hour in the Russian president's limousine before the leaders held talks together with their delegations. It was their first meeting in 2025.

After the encounter on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation security forum summit in the Chinese city of Tianjin, Modi shared a photo of himself and Putin in the back seat of the car. "Conversations with him are always insightful," Modi wrote in a post on social media site X.

The Kremlin quoted Putin as saying that trade and economic co-operation between Russia and India were "generally showing positive dynamics" against the backdrop of their "friendly, trusting" relations.

Beijing is using the two-day meeting as a chance to showcase itself as a pillar of global governance, in contrast to the administration of Trump, whose tariffs



Vladimir Putin, Narendra Modi and Xi Jinping confer before yesterday's summit in Tianjin, China — AP/WIDE WORLD

have hit both friends and foes in the region. China's President Xi Jinping has held bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the summit, including with Modi, and will meet Putin today.

India has become Moscow's largest buyer of seaborne crude oil, importing nearly \$140bn worth since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Indian government data shows. Much of that supply is processed by Indian refiners into petrol and diesel and sold on domestic and international markets.

Western countries, including the US, encouraged the trade, which helped maintain global market prices, as long as the price that India paid for the crude remained below the G7 price cap set to limit Russian revenues.

But Trump administration officials have since accused Indian companies of being "profiteers" in Moscow's war, deepening a rift between Washington and New Delhi. In a post on his Truth Social platform yesterday, Trump complained that India bought "most of its oil and military products from Russia, very little from the US".

High tariffs set by New Delhi for decades had made US businesses unable to sell to India, making trade between the two countries a "totally one-sided disaster", the US president wrote.

Modi and Putin have already spoken twice by phone since Trump first threatened India with a 50 per cent tariff early last month. Indian foreign minister S Jaishankar and national security adviser Ajit Doval have also met Putin in Moscow, while the Russian president is expected to visit India this year.

Amit Bhandari, a senior fellow for energy at Gateway House, a Mumbai-based think-tank, said: "It is clear that for India, Russian oil is here to stay. Russia is where the oil is."

Moscow's significance to New Delhi is underpinned by strategic relations that date back to the cold war and Russia is the top international supplier of weapons to India.

New Delhi and Beijing have also moved to patch up ties badly damaged by a 2020 border clash.

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Suspected Russian GPS jamming forced von der Leyen plane to use paper maps

HENRY FOY — VILNIUS

A suspected Russian interference attack targeting Ursula von der Leyen disabled navigation services at a Bulgarian airport and forced the European Commission president's plane to land using paper maps.

The jet carrying von der Leyen to Plovdiv on Sunday afternoon was deprived of electronic navigational aids while approaching the city's airport, in what three officials briefed on the incident

a notable increase in [GPS] jamming and recently spoofing occurrences," it said. "These interferences disrupt the accurate reception of [GPS] signals, leading to various operational challenges for aircraft and ground systems."

Brussels also confirmed the incident, saying that Bulgarian authorities suspected "this was due to blatant interference by Russia". It added: "We are of course aware and used to the threats and intimidation that are a regular component of Russia's hostile behaviour."

which distorts or prevents access to the satellite-based navigation system, was traditionally deployed by the military to defend sensitive sites but has increasingly been used by nations such as Russia as a means of disrupting civilian life.

GPS jamming incidents have risen significantly in the Baltic Sea and eastern European states close to Russia in recent years, affecting planes, boats and civilians who use the service for navigation.

"Generally, we have been seeing quite a lot of such jamming and spoofing

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