
Trump Ties Levies on India to Its Russia Purchases

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President Trump said the U.S. would penalize India for buying Russian arms and energy as part of a tariff package that would kick in after Trump's Aug. 1 reciprocal tariff deadline, appearing to undercut hopes for a trade deal

he has said for weeks was close to being finalized.

In a post on his Truth Social network, he said India was a friend of the U.S. but criticized high Indian tariffs. "INDIA WILL THEREFORE BE PAYING A TARIFF OF 25%," Trump posted, adding that India will also pay a "penalty" for buying Russian goods.

The 25% tariff represents a slight modification of the levies that were already set to take effect this week. In April, Trump set the tariff on Indian imports at 26% before pausing them to allow for talks.

India has "always bought a vast majority of their military equipment from Russia," and they "are Russia's largest

buyer of ENERGY, along with China," Trump wrote his post.

India's relationship with Russia extends back decades through the Cold War. Today, Russia is India's top arms supplier, accounting for 38% of imports during 2020 to 2024, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. That relationship is

partly why India has stayed neutral on the war in Ukraine.

New Delhi also took advantage of oil sanctions imposed on Russia to hammer out pacts to buy Russian oil at a discounted price, accounting for one-third of Russia's oil exports in the last quarter of 2024, according to the Observer Research Foundation.