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Trump Raises India Tariffs Over Russian Oil

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – President Donald Trump has announced a major tariff increase on India, raising trade tensions over the country's continued energy purchases from Russia.

In a new executive order signed Wednesday, Trump approved an additional 25% tariff on Indian imports, bringing the total tariff rate to 50%. The decision is set to take effect on August 27 and is tied directly to India's ongoing importation of Russian oil.

“The actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States,” Trump stated in the order.

This move forms part of a broader foreign policy strategy aimed at isolating Russia economically. It also aligns with Trump’s previously stated August 9 deadline, which demands that Russia enter a peace agreement with Ukraine. Failure to do so, Trump warned, would trigger a series of secondary penalties on nations continuing energy trade with Moscow.

India has become one of Russia’s key energy partners since the war in Ukraine began. With discounted crude prices on offer, Indian refiners have significantly increased their intake of Russian oil. While many Western nations have scaled back purchases from Russia, India has defended its position as a matter of national interest.

Speaking anonymously, a senior administration official said the tariff was a “necessary step” to apply meaningful pressure on nations enabling Russia’s war economy through energy trade. “India has benefited from lower energy costs at the expense of broader geopolitical security,” the official noted. “That’s no longer acceptable.”

Wednesday’s announcement followed a high-level diplomatic visit to Moscow by Trump’s special envoy, Steve Witkoff, who met with Russian President Vladimir Putin for over three hours. While the White House has not released details of the discussion, the meeting reportedly involved a last-ditch attempt to secure a peace agreement ahead of the looming August 9 deadline.

The decision to target India comes at a sensitive time. U.S.-India relations have improved in recent years, particularly in the areas of defense and technology. However, energy trade with Russia has remained a sticking point between the two countries. The latest tariffs could strain those ties further.

Trump’s team has not ruled out additional actions. Countries such as China, Turkey, and Brazil, all of which have maintained commercial ties with Russia, may also face economic penalties if they continue purchasing Russian oil or natural gas beyond the August 9 cutoff.

India’s government has not yet issued an official response to the tariff increase. However, analysts suggest New Delhi may push back diplomatically, arguing that energy security

must remain a sovereign decision.

Whether the tariffs achieve the intended result of pressuring Russia remains to be seen, but the Trump administration appears set on making it more difficult for Moscow to maintain oil revenue through global trade.