

India Slams US Over Rights Report and Tariffs

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New Delhi – India’s Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has rejected a recent United States human rights report that criticized the country’s record, describing the findings as “misrepresentations” and “one-sided projections.” The comments came amid ongoing trade tensions, with Washington imposing higher tariffs on certain Indian exports.

On August 6, the MEA issued a statement condemning the tariffs as “unfair, unjustified, and unreasonable,” adding that India would take all necessary steps to protect its national interests. The U.S. has imposed a 25% duty on certain Indian goods, with another 25% potentially taking effect on August 27 if a trade agreement is not reached.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal confirmed that a U.S. trade delegation is scheduled to arrive in New Delhi on August 25 for the sixth round of talks, aimed at negotiating a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA). The discussions are expected to focus on reducing trade barriers and addressing concerns on both sides.

At the MEA’s weekly briefing, spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stressed the strength of India-U.S. ties, calling them “anchored in shared interests and democratic values.” He noted that the relationship has endured “several transitions and challenges” and expressed hope for continued progress “based on mutual respect and shared interests.”

When asked about the U.S. State Department’s human rights assessment, Jaiswal rejected its conclusions. “Such assessments are a mix of imputations, misrepresentations, and one-sided projections,” he said, adding that they reflect a “limited understanding of India’s

democratic framework, pluralistic society, and robust institutional mechanisms for protecting human rights.”

The MEA also addressed speculation regarding Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s possible attendance at the United Nations General Assembly in New York this September, clarifying that no decision has been made. Regarding the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in China, Jaiswal said any announcements about the Prime Minister’s participation would be made “at the right time.”

The developments underscore India’s intent to maintain firm positions on both trade and foreign policy. While committed to dialogue with Washington, New Delhi has made clear it will not accept what it sees as unfair economic measures or inaccurate portrayals of its democratic practices.