

## India's Prime Minister to Attend SCO Summit in China, Bilateral with Xi Expected



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is slated to visit China for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, marking his first visit to the country since the 2020 Galwan Valley border clash. The visit, scheduled from August 31 to September 1, is expected to include a bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. This potential meeting is a significant development, signaling a possible normalization of ties between the two Asian giants after years of strained relations.

The SCO summit in Tianjin will be a key annual meeting for member states to discuss regional security, economic cooperation, and geopolitical issues. While official confirmation of the bilateral meeting has not been released, government sources indicate that preparations are underway for Modi's participation. This would be the second formal meeting between Modi and Xi since the 2020 border standoff, following a brief exchange during a BRICS summit in Russia last year.

The trip comes amid a complex geopolitical landscape, with the United States threatening to impose higher tariffs on Indian goods. This trade dispute, stemming from India's continued purchase of discounted Russian oil, adds a layer of strategic importance to the SCO summit. India's presence alongside Russia and China at the meeting could be seen as a way to assert its strategic autonomy in foreign policy.

The planned bilateral talks between Modi and Xi are expected to focus on a range of issues, including further de-escalation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). While disengagement of troops has occurred at several friction points, a full de-escalation and de-induction of forces

remains on the table. The two countries have taken some steps to repair ties, such as the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra pilgrimage and the issuance of tourist visas for Chinese nationals. However, the path to fully normalized relations remains long, with outstanding issues yet to be resolved.

The visit underscores India's multifaceted diplomacy as it navigates relationships with major global powers while pursuing its national interests. The SCO summit provides a critical platform for India to engage with its neighbors and other Eurasian partners, and the anticipated meeting between the two leaders could be a pivotal moment for regional stability.