

Putin to Visit India, Set to Solidify Strategic Defense Deals



Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to visit India by the end of 2025, with his trip anticipated to cement a major defense agreement for the procurement of Russia's advanced Su-57 fighter jet. The visit, which follows a series of high-level meetings between Indian and Russian officials, is set to further solidify the "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership" between the two nations.

National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval recently traveled to Moscow to meet with his Russian counterpart, where the agenda for Putin's visit was finalized. The discussions focused on expanding defense and counter-terrorism cooperation, including the potential purchase of additional S-400 missile systems, and the establishment of Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facilities in India. The centerpiece of the talks, however, was the potential deal for the Su-57, Russia's fifth-generation stealth fighter jet.

The Su-57 has been described by Russian sources as a "game-changer," capable of launching hypersonic and nuclear payloads, a capability that would significantly enhance India's air power. The jet is designed with advanced stealth technology, super-maneuverability, and state-of-the-art avionics, making it a formidable multirole fighter for air superiority and strike operations. The potential acquisition of the Su-57 comes after India reportedly rejected an offer

for the American F-35 fighter jet, leaving the Russian aircraft as its only immediate option for a fifth-generation fighter.

Sources indicate that the visit and the proposed defense deals are taking place amidst pressure from the U.S., which has imposed tariffs on India for its continued purchase of Russian oil and military equipment. Despite this, both Indian and Russian officials have reaffirmed their commitment to deepen their bilateral ties.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently had a phone conversation with President Putin, during which he thanked the Russian leader for his support following a recent terror attack and reiterated his commitment to the bilateral agenda. Modi also confirmed his eagerness to host Putin for the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit.

The leaders are also expected to discuss cooperation in other key areas, including mineral and energy collaboration, and joint development in advanced technologies like carbon fiber and 3D printing. The visit shows the enduring nature of the India-Russia partnership, which both nations see as crucial for navigating a complex global landscape.