

US, India restart trade talks amid hopes to end tariff standoff

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Officials from the United States and India have begun a fresh round of trade negotiations as both sides seek to resolve a deepening dispute triggered by U.S. tariffs. The new talks — held this week in New Delhi — are seen as a bid to salvage a potential trade pact as tensions simmer after Washington imposed hefty duties on Indian goods.

In August 2025, the U.S. imposed 50 % levies on many Indian imports, citing concerns over India's discounted purchases of Russian crude. The move severely impacted Indian exports — especially in labour-intensive industries such as textiles, gems and jewellery, leather goods, and seafood.

For India, the pressure comes at a difficult time: exports to the U.S. have fallen sharply, job creation remains a challenge, and the economy faces headwinds. Meanwhile, U.S. negotiators are pressing for clear assurances and commitments, making the negotiations complex.

The visiting U.S. delegation is led by Rick Switzer and comes soon after a high-level meeting in New Delhi involving political and economic leadership. On the Indian side, commerce officials have maintained that any deal must protect workers, small businesses, and sensitive sectors like agriculture and traditional industries.

Still, optimism remains: negotiators hope these talks — albeit framed as “familiarisation” rather than a formal round — may help unblock the impasse and set the stage for a broader, mutually beneficial trade agreement.

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