

Kremlin plays down US' submarine order, urges caution on nuke rhetoric

Moscow: Russia said on Monday that everyone should be "very, very careful" about nuclear rhetoric, responding to a statement by US President Trump that he had ordered a repositioning of US nuclear submarines. In its first public reaction to Trump's comments, the Kremlin played down their significance and said it was not looking to get into a public argument with him.

Trump said on Friday he had ordered two nuclear submarines to be moved to "the appropriate regions" in response to remarks from former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev about the risk of war between the nuclear-armed adversaries.

"In this case, it is obvious that American submarines are already on combat duty. This is an ongoing process, that's the first thing," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. "But in general, of course, we would not want to get involved in such a controversy and would not want to comment on it in any way. Of course, we believe that everyone should be very, very careful with nuclear rhetoric."

The episode comes at a delicate moment, with Trump threatening to impose new sanctions on Russia and buyers of its oil, including India and China, unless President Putin agrees by Friday to end the war in Ukraine. Putin said last week that peace talks had made some positive progress but that Russia had the momentum in the war, signalling no shift in his position. REUTERS



Asked what Witkoff's message for Russia would be, Trump said: 'We've got to get to a deal where people stop getting killed'

Deadline looms but Russia shows no sign of making concessions

The coming week could mark a pivotal moment in the war between Russia and Ukraine, as US President Trump's deadline for the Kremlin to reach a peace deal approaches — or it could pass without consequence. Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff is expected in Moscow, just before Trump's Friday deadline for the Kremlin to stop the killing or face potentially severe economic penalties from Washington. Witkoff is expected to land in the Russian capital on Wednesday or Thursday, according to Trump, following his trip to Israel and Gaza. "They would like to see (Witkoff)," Trump said Sunday of the Russians. "They've asked that he meet so we'll see what happens." Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday that officials are happy to meet with Trump's envoy. "We are always glad to see Witkoff," he said. "We consider (talks with Witkoff) important." Trump said Sunday that Russia has proven to be "pretty good at avoiding sanctions." AGENCIES

'Unreasonable': India hits back at Trump tirade on Russian oil

In Fresh Outburst, US Prez Threatens Steep Hike In Tariffs

Sachin Parashar & Chidanand Rajghatta

In its first direct public push-back against US President Trump's repeated targeting of India over trade with Russia, the Centre termed his criticism "unjustified and unreasonable". It said like any major economy, New Delhi will take all necessary measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security.

In an official statement, ministry of external affairs said the US itself continues to import uranium hexafluoride for its nuclear industry, palladium for its EVs and fertilisers and chemicals from Russia.

The rare outpouring of frustration with Trump's rants followed another outburst by the US president in which he accused India of buying mas-

“India is not only buying massive amounts of Russian oil, they are then, for much of the oil purchased, selling it on the open market for big profits. They don't care how many people in Ukraine are being killed by the Russian war machine

—Donald Trump



“The very nations criticising India are themselves indulging in trade with Russia. Unlike our case, such trade is not even a vital national compulsion

—MEA

sive amounts of Russian oil and selling it in the open market for big profits, while threatening to hike tariffs further.

MEA said India's imports are meant to ensure affordable energy to Indian consumers and are a necessity compelled by global market situation.

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Threat unlikely to wean India off Russian crude

Sidhartha@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Trump's latest threat is unlikely to affect India's decision to source crude from Moscow as long as it's cheaper than the alternatives.

"We will go solely by the interest of our consumers and opt for the best option price-wise. If Russian crude works out cheaper than what we can get from other sources, why should we penalise our consumers?" said a senior govt source who did not rule out the possibility of India exploring further discounts from Moscow in the light of Trump's threat.

Sources said NSA Ajit Doval's visit to Russia, beginning Tuesday, will yield clarity on the geo-economic trilemma.

The Centre has so far not made any move to wean off Indian oil refiners from Rus-

'FULL TRANSPARENCY'

► Trump's threat ignores mkt realities, misrepresents trade data and undermines a key partnership in Indo-Pacific: Trade research body GTRI

► India's oil trade with Russia has taken place with full transparency and broad understanding with US, it says

► In fact, in May, India's crude petroleum imports from Russia fell 10% to \$9.2bn

sian crude, which comes at a steep discount compared to purchases from west Asia or US. It has not just helped keep domestic pump prices lower, but also benefited European countries, which have been major buyers of diesel and jet fuel from India, sources said.

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Cambodian, Thai officials meet in Malaysia to iron out ceasefire details

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 4 (AP)

THAI and Cambodian officials met in Malaysia on Monday for the first round of cross-border committee talks since a tense ceasefire was brokered last week after five days of deadly armed border clashes that killed dozens and displaced over 260,000 people.

The four-day General Border Committee meetings were initially due to be hosted by Cambodia, but both sides later agreed to a neutral venue in Malaysia, the annual chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which has mediated the halt in hostilities last month.

The July 28 ceasefire followed

economic pressure from President Donald Trump, who had warned the two warring nations that the US would not conclude trade deals with them if the fighting persisted. Washington lowered tariffs on goods from the two countries from 36 per cent to 19 per cent on Aug 1 following the truce.

Monday's talks focused on ironing out details to avoid further clashes. Discussions of the decades-long competing territorial claims over the pockets of land near the shared border are not on the agenda.

Thailand and Cambodia have been feuding neighbours for centuries, since both were mighty empires.

China Rejects Threats On Oil Buy From Russia, Iran

Coercion Won't Achieve Anything, Will Defend Our Sovereignty: China To US

Washington: US and Chinese officials may be able to settle many of their differences to reach a trade deal and avert punishing tariffs, but they remain far apart on one issue: the US demand that China stop purchasing oil from Iran and Russia.

"China will always ensure its energy supply in ways that serve our national interests," China's foreign ministry posted on X Wednesday following two days of trade negotiations in Stockholm, responding to the US threat of a 100% tariff. "Coercion and pressuring will not achieve anything. China will firmly defend its sovereignty, security and development interests," the ministry said.

The response is notable at a time when both Beijing and Washington are signalling optimism and goodwill about reaching a deal to keep commercial ties between the world's two largest economies stable. US treasury secretary Scott Bessent, emerging from the talks, told reporters that when it comes to Russian oil purchases,

the "Chinese take their sovereignty very seriously". "We do not want to impede on their sovereignty, so they would say 100% tariff," Bessent said. Gabriel Wildau, managing director of the consultancy Teneo, said he doubts President Trump would actually deploy the 100% tariff. "Realising those threats would derail all the recent progress and probably kill any chance" for Trump and China President Xi Jinping to announce a trade deal if they should meet this fall, Wildau said.

In seeking to restrict oil sales by Russia and Iran, the US wants to reduce their funding.

A 2024 report by the US Energy Information Administration estimates that roughly 80% to 90% of the oil exported by Iran went to China. Beijing also is an important customer for Russia. In April, Chinese imports of Russian oil rose 20% over the previous month to more than 1.3 million barrels per day, according to the KSE Institute, an analytical centre at the Kyiv School of Economics. AP



US has threatened China with separate 100% tariff for buying Russian oil

EU to delay retaliatory tariff on US by 6 mths

The EU will suspend its two packages of countermeasures to US tariffs for six months following a deal with US President Trump, a Commission spokesperson said on Monday. The EU-US agreement leaves many questions open, including tariff rates on spirits, and Trump's executive order last week setting tariffs on most EU goods at 15% did not include carve-outs such as for cars and car parts. EU officials have said they expect more executive orders to follow soon.

Swiss ready 'more attractive' offer for US

The Swiss govt is ready to make a "more attractive offer" in trade talks with Washington, the cabinet said on Monday, after a crisis meeting aimed at averting a 39% US tariff on Swiss imports that could hammer the export-driven economy. The Federal Council it was determined to pursue discussions with the US, if necessary beyond the Aug 7 deadline that Trump has set for the tariff to come into effect. The statement did not give any details on what the Swiss govt may offer. REUTERS

US may require \$15k bonds for some tourist/biz visas

Washington: The US could require bonds of up to \$15,000 for some tourist and business visas under a pilot programme launching in two weeks, a govt notice said on Monday, an effort that aims to crack down on visitors who overstay their visas.

The programme gives US consular officers the discretion to impose bonds on visitors from countries with high rates of visa overstays, according to a Federal Register notice. Bonds could also be applied to people coming from countries where screening and vetting information is deemed insufficient, the notice said.

President Trump has made cracking down on illegal immigration a focus of his presidency. He issued a travel ban in June that fully or partially blocks citizens of 19 nations from entering the US on national security grounds.

Effective Aug 20, the new visa programme will last for approximately a year, the govt noti-



The move, to be effective from Aug 20, aims to crack down on visitors who overstay their visas

ce said. Consular officers will have three options for visa applicants subjected to the bonds: \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$15,000, but will generally be expected to require at least \$10,000, it said. The funds will be returned to travellers if they depart in accordance with the terms of their visas, the notice said.

A similar programme was launched in Nov 2020, but it was not fully implemented due to the drop in global travel associated with the pandemic, the notice said. The state department was unable to estimate the no. of visa applicants who could be affected by the change. REUTERS

B'desh witnesses