

# Not received any message from India about stopping oil purchases: Russia

■ **By Vinay Shukla**

MOSCOW, Feb 3 (PTI)

**RUSSIA** has not heard any statements from India about stopping Russian oil purchases, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Tuesday.

His comments came a day after US President Donald Trump claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has “agreed to stop buying Russian Oil, and to buy much more from the United States and, potentially, Venezuela.” “We haven’t heard any statements from New Delhi on this matter yet,” Peskov said.

The Kremlin spokesman also said that Russia intends to continue to develop its relations with

India in every possible way, according to Russian media reports. Deputy Prime Minister



Alexander Novak, who oversees the energy sector in the Cabinet, said the Government is closely monitoring the situation.

He pointed out that Russia is only seeing public statements from the US regarding the pos-

sibility of India refusing Russian oil. “We’re only seeing public statements. We’ll see how the situation develops,” Novak said.

He said that Russia was confident its energy resources would continue to be in demand globally, as they ensure a balance between supply and demand.

“Overall, our energy resources are in demand. Supply will always find demand because the balance is maintained,” Novak said.

Sources in Russia’s Energy Ministry said they have not received any notice from Indian refiners to cancel contracts.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump, who spoke with PM Modi on Monday, announced that

*(Contd on page 5)*

# Iran's President Pezeshkian seeks fair, equitable negotiations with US

DUBAI, Feb 3 (AP)

IRAN'S President said on Tuesday that he instructed the country's Foreign Minister to "pursue fair and equitable negotiations" with the United States, the first clear sign from Tehran it wants to try to negotiate as tensions remain high with US after the Mideast country's bloody crackdown on nationwide protests last month.

The announcement marked a major turn for reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian, who broadly had warned Iranians for weeks that the turmoil in his country had gone beyond his control. It also signals that the President received support from Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei for talks that the 86-year-old cleric

The announcement signals that President received support from Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei for talks that the cleric previously had dismissed

ic previously had dismissed.

Turkey had been working behind the scenes to make the talks happen there later this week as US Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff is travelling in the region.

But whether Iran and the US can reach an agreement remains to be seen, particularly as President Donald Trump now has included Iran's nuclear programme in a list of demands from Tehran in any talks. Trump ordered the bombing of three Iranian nuclear sites during the 12-day war Israel launched against Iran in June.

Writing on X, Pezeshkian said

in English and Farsi that the decision came after "requests from friendly governments in the region to respond to the proposal by the President of the United States for negotiations."

"I have instructed my Minister of Foreign Affairs, provided that a suitable environment exists - one free from threats and unreasonable expectations - to pursue fair and equitable negotiations, guided by principles of dignity, prudence, and expediency," he said. The US has yet to acknowledge the talks will take place. A semi-official news agency in Iran on Monday reported - then lat-

er deleted without explanation - that Pezeshkian had issued such an order to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who held multiple rounds of talks with Witkoff before the 12-day war.

Late on Monday, the pan-Arab satellite channel Al Mayadeen, which is politically allied with the Iranian-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, aired an interview with Ali Shamkhani, a top Khamenei adviser on security. Shamkhani, who now sits on the country's Supreme National Security Council and who in the 1980s led Iran's navy, wore a naval uniform as he spoke.

He suggested if the talks happened, they would be indirect at the beginning.

The talks would solely focus on nuclear issues, he added.

# Trade deal with US adds momentum to India's growth ambition: Industry leaders

NEW DELHI, Feb 3 (PTI)

THE India-US trade deal adds meaningful momentum to India's growth ambitions and supports the country's aspiration to be a globally competitive manufacturing and innovation hub, industry leaders said on Tuesday.

Captains of India Inc, from Bharti Enterprises' Sunil Mittal to Aditya Birla Group's Kumar Mangalam Birla, and Mahindra Group's Anish Shah, reacted to the landmark pact, underlining its potential to transform the bilateral trade and investment landscape.

Reacting to the trade agreement between the two countries, Mahindra Group CEO & Managing Director Anish Shah welcomed the development, terming it as "a significant step forward in strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties.

"With the Indian economy on a strong growth trajectory, this deal adds meaningful momentum to India's growth ambitions," he noted.

Shah further said, "The immediate reduction in reciprocal tariffs on Indian



exports to 18 per cent, along with the commitment to progressively lower tariff and non-tariff barriers, will boost growth momentum and improve the predictability businesses need to invest with confidence.

Bharti Enterprises Founder and Chairman, Sunil Bharti Mittal, said the India-US trade deal is a much-awaited and significant milestone for both nations, unlocking immense opportunities for investments and growth.

"The flurry of FTAs is an affirmation of India's role at the centre of global frameworks, aimed at building resilient international trade patterns," Mittal said.

Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar

Mangalam Birla said the reduced tariffs will help strengthen the strategic and economic ties between the two great countries and provide additional opportunities for investment and collaboration.

Stating that the Aditya Birla Group is the largest Indian investor in the US, he said, "We see this agreement help shape more resilient supply chains, unlock manufacturing opportunities and drive long-term economic competitiveness in both the US and India."

Birla said the group is committed to expanding its presence and investments in the US, "where we see substantial opportunities for innovation, growth and enduring partnerships".

TVS Motor Company Chairman Sudarshan Venu also said the reduction in the US reciprocal tariff on Indian goods to 18 per cent is a positive step that improves export competitiveness and reinforces confidence in long-term bilateral economic ties, furthering Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

# Manipur to get new CM after end of Prez rule

**Y Khemchand Singh**  
elected Manipur BJP  
legislature party leader

NEW DELHI, Feb 3 (PTI)

**FORMER** minister Y Khemchand Singh was elected the leader of the NDA legislature party in Manipur on Tuesday, paving the way for the formation of a new Government in the northeastern state with him as Chief Minister.

Nemcha Kipgen, a woman Kuki leader and former minister, is likely to be the deputy Chief Minister in the new Manipur Government when it is formed, sources said.

The BJP legislature party of Manipur elected 62-year-old Singh as its leader at a meeting held at the BJP headquarters here.



It was attended by 35 of the 37 BJP MLAs, besides the party's central observer Tarun Chugh, its

northeast in-charge Sambit Patra, and BJP state president A Sharda Devi, among others.

Kipgen (60) was also chosen to be the deputy Chief Minister in the new government.

The two BJP MLAs who did not attend the meeting were unwell.

Subsequently, another meeting was held at the Manipur Bhavan, where MLAs of NDA constituents in Manipur -- six of National People's Party (NPP), five of Naga People's Front (NPF) and three Independents -- and BJP legislators were in attendance. They endorsed Singh as

*(Contd on page 5)*

# India-US trade deal a 'BIG DECISION': PM Modi

NEW DELHI, Feb 3 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the India-US trade deal is a "big decision" that will benefit everyone in the country, and asserted that his Government always works in favour of the nation.

The Prime Minister made these remarks at the meeting of the NDA Parliamentary Party, coalition MPs present at the meeting said.

NDA coalition members congratulated Modi for the trade deals with the EU and the US, saying it would strengthen Indian manufacturers, exporters and entrepreneurs.

The Prime Minister said the India-US trade deal is a "big decision" and will benefit everyone in the country, an MP who attended the meeting said.

India and the US have agreed to a trade deal under which Washington will bring down



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP National President Nitin Nabin, Nationalist Congress Party MP Praful Patel and others during the NDA Parliamentary Party meeting at Parliament premises in New Delhi on Tuesday. (PTI)

the reciprocal tariff on Indian goods to 18 per cent from a total 50 per cent. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said there is excitement about the deal in the entire country.

"There is excitement among the MPs that nine trade deals have been concluded under the leadership of the PM. The trade deals have been signed with a total of 39 countries.

**India-US trade deal will benefit everyone in the country, says PM Modi. US will bring down the reciprocal tariff on Indian goods to 18 per cent from a total 50 per cent.**

This is historic. All these 39 countries are developed countries... This is historic. There has been a very good atmosphere in the country," he said after the meeting.

Shiv Sena MP Milind Deora said, "PM Modi explained to all the MPs that the government works in favour of India, be it a trade deal or budget".

"The credit for the trade deal between India and America and India and India-Europe goes to PM Modi. This has happened because of his determination. The trade deal will give benefits to small-scale businessmen," he asserted.

(Contd on page 5)

## Interest of agri and dairy sectors protected: Goyal

India has got a good deal because of personal relationship between PM Modi and Trump. Deal will open huge opportunities for poor, fishermen, farmers and youth of country, says Goyal.



Read Editorial  
DETAILS PLEASE!  
on page 8

NEW DELHI, Feb 3 (PTI)

Donald Trump. India-US trade deal will open huge