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Modi Visits Russia for Strategic Talks with Putin Amid Ongoing Ukraine Conflict

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Russia on July 8-9th 2024. During this two-day visit, he attended the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit with President Vladimir Putin, marking his first trip since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. During the summit, Modi emphasised the need for a peaceful resolution to the Ukraine conflict, stating that peace talks cannot succeed amidst ongoing violence. Putin acknowledged Modi's efforts in seeking a peaceful solution. On July 09, Modi received the 'Order of St Andrew the Apostle' award from Putin for fostering bilateral ties.

The visit was Modi's first bilateral trip in his third tenure, it focussed on enhancing cooperation in energy, trade, manufacturing, and fertilisers. The evident warmth between Modi and Putin drew criticism from Ukraine and concern from the U.S., though India maintained its "freedom of choice." Modi's visit, occurring two years into the Ukraine war, reflected a significant diplomatic stance, highlighting a nuanced shift in New Delhi's perspective on the conflict.

This edition of CUTS Occasional News Wrap (ONW) provides a comprehensive overview of the visit, covering articles and news from both print and electronic media.

News/Op-ed	Key Takeaway
<p>Modi's Moscow visit points to enduring friendship with Putin's Russia</p> <p><i>Charles Maynes</i></p> <p>NPR</p> <p>July 08, 2024</p>	<p>The Indian prime minister's visit — which partially coincides with this week's NATO summit gathering in Washington, D.C. — provides yet another opportunity for Putin to herald Russia's membership in non-Western clubs such as the BRICS group of advanced developing nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation among others.</p>
<p>U.S. has been quite clear about its concerns on India's relationship with Russia: Official</p> <p>Moneycontrol</p> <p>July 10, 2024</p>	<p>We have been quite clear about our concerns about India's relationship with Russia. We have expressed those privately directly to the Indian government, and continue to do so. And that has not changed, U.S. State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters at his daily news conference soon after Modi left Russia.</p>
<p>Modi in Russia highlights: PM departs for Austria after fruitful two-day visit</p> <p>The Hindu</p> <p>July 11, 2024</p>	<p>India and Russia discussed ways to further shore up bilateral cooperation in sectors such as energy, trade, manufacturing and fertilisers. Modi told Putin that a solution to the Ukraine conflict is not possible on the battlefield and that peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs, guns and bullets.</p>
<p>The state of India-Russia relations in light of PM Modi's visit to Moscow</p> <p><i>Rajoli Siddharth Jayaprakash</i></p> <p>Observer Research Foundation</p> <p>July 15, 2024</p>	<p>During the two-day visit, discussions were held on pressing issues such as the war in Ukraine, the repatriation of Indians in the Russian armed forces who were duped into fighting in the frontline, and other issues such as the crisis in Gaza. Along with these discussions, 15 agreements were signed between India and Russia.</p>
<p>India plans talks with Russia to eliminate non-tariff barriers</p> <p>The Indian Express</p> <p>July 16, 2024</p>	<p>India is aiming to discuss ways to eliminate non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that Indian exporters are facing in Russia in order to boost exports to the region, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal told reporters during a press briefing adding that a visit for the same is being planned too.</p>
<p>India-Russia relations march ahead</p> <p><i>Rajiv Bhatia</i></p> <p>Gateway House</p> <p>July 18, 2024</p>	<p>The 22nd India-Russia summit, held in Moscow on July 09 during Prime Minister Modi's official visit, focussed on expanding bilateral economic, energy, cultural and defence cooperation. It indicates the two nations' commitment to adding substance and new momentum to their relationship.</p>

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<p>Strategic Balance The Statesman July 19, 2024</p>	<p>The recent diplomatic dance between India and the United States, highlighted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Moscow, signals a complex balancing act that harkens back to historical precedents. Modi’s cordial meetings with President Vladimir Putin, punctuated by warm embraces, have elicited stern warnings from U.S. officials who caution New Delhi against taking its relationship with Washington for granted.</p>
<p>U.S. disappointed about symbolism and timing of Modi's Moscow trip, says State Department official Deccan Herald July 25, 2024</p>	<p>I could not agree with you more about our disappointment about the symbolism and the timing of Prime Minister Modi's trip to Moscow. We are having those tough conversations with our Indian friends, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu told American lawmakers at a Congressional hearing.</p> <p>I assure you may be if I could just take a moment to put into context that visit. Prime Minister Modi, two weeks before he went to Moscow, also saw President Zelenskyy on the margins of the G7 summit in Italy, he further added.</p>
<p>The ‘geo-calculus’ of the Moscow visit <i>Suhasini Haidar</i> The Hindu July 26, 2024</p>	<p>The evident warmth between Modi and the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, drew sharp criticism from the Ukraine President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and also a series of statements from the U.S. State Department, the National Security Adviser and the U.S. Ambassador to India, expressing disappointment.</p> <p>New Delhi has asserted its “freedom of choice” but has moved to allay concerns that anything fundamental has changed in India’s worldview as a result of the Russia visit.</p>
<p>Ties with Russia built on shared interests, U.S. told <i>Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury</i> The Economic Times July 26, 2024</p>	<p>India affirmed that it has a long-standing relationship with Russia based on mutuality of interests. The strong retort by the Ministry of External Affairs came a day after the U.S. State Department expressed disappointment over the "symbolism and timing" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recently concluded trip to Moscow.</p>