



• Narendra Modi (left), India's Prime Minister, hugging Donald Trump, US President

Modi meets Trump in Washington

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INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi landed in Washington late on Wednesday night and is scheduled to meet United States President Donald Trump on Thursday

at the White House.

While the two leaders have often described each other as friends in the past, and have even held joint political rallies together, Modi's visit comes at a time when the relationship is being tested by Trump's tariff threats and deportation realities.

"I look forward to meeting my friend,

President Trump," Modi said in a departing message, adding that he has a "very warm recollection of working together in [Trump's] first term".

Trump had announced Modi's visit to the US after their telephone conversation on January 27, a week after he was sworn into office for his second term. After their call, Trump also said he believed Modi would do "what is right" on undocumented Indian migrants in the US.

But pleasing both Trump and the Indian public won't be easy for Modi.

Here's what's at stake for India, and what Modi might bring with him to the meeting with Trump to try to placate the US President.

The US is India's largest export destination and ranks among its top two trade partners in several sectors, including technology, trade, defence and energy. The two-way trade between the US and India touched an all-time high of \$118bn in 2023-24.

Bilateral ties have also strengthened in the last three decades as the US has increasingly focused on countering the rise of a shared rival - China.

But despite that convergence, Trump has made clear - as he had with several US allies - that he has deep differences too with India.

During his campaign for the 2024 election, Trump labelled India a "very big abuser" of trade and threatened tariffs. Since being elected, he pushed New Delhi to buy more US-made security equipment as a way to reduce the imbalance in their trade. In 2024, the trade surplus stood at \$45.6bn, in favour of India, according to US government data. — ALJAZEERA