

GERMAN MINISTER'S VISIT COMES DAYS AFTER US DOUBLED TARIFFS ON INDIA

India counting on German support to expedite EU FTA

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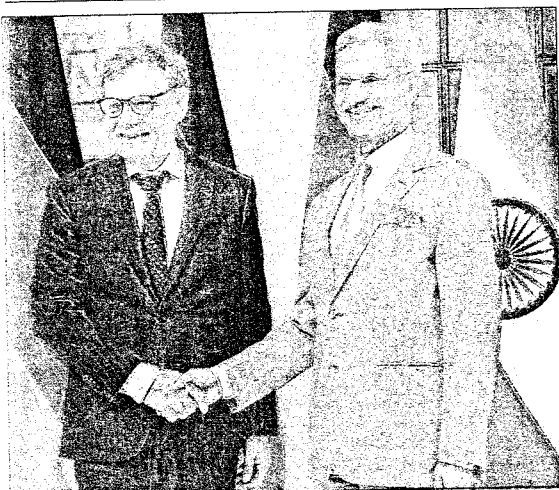
New Delhi/Berlin,
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INDIA IS COUNTING on Germany's support to deepen its ties with the European Union (EU) and expedite trade talks, foreign minister S Jaishankar said on Wednesday, as he urged a doubling of bilateral trade with Berlin.

Jaishankar met his German counterpart, Johann Wadephul, who is on a two-day visit to India, in New Delhi, with both ministers later calling for an increase in bilateral trade, including in the areas of defence and security.

"We count on your support to deepen our relationship with the European Union and expedite the FTA negotiation," he told Wadephul as they began their talks, referring to a free trade agreement (FTA).

Trade negotiations between India and the EU - which resumed in 2021 after being stalled for eight years - have faced hurdles over the EU's push to cut import taxes



JOHANN WADEPHUL,
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS, GERMANY

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by lowering them*

External affairs minister (EAM)
S Jaishankar with his German
counterpart Johann Wadephul
(left) during a meeting in
New Delhi on Wednesday

PTI

on cars and dairy while seeking stricter climate and labour rules on Indian goods. India wants to protect local farmers, avoid rigid green rules and keep control over legal disputes.

While Jaishankar, speaking to reporters after Wednesday's meeting, said India would like the FTA to reach a "decisive conclusion" in the coming days, the German minister said the deal could

be concluded in the coming months.

"If others put up trade barriers, then we should respond by lowering them," Wadephul said.

Trade minister Piyush Goyal had said on Tuesday that trade officials were holding talks in Brussels.

Wadephul's visit comes days after the US doubled its tariffs on Indian goods, imposing a punitive 25%

additional levy over India's purchases of Russian oil, seen by Washington as financing Moscow's war effort in Ukraine, on top of the initial 25% tariff that was announced in July.

India has sharply criticised both the US and the EU, saying it is being unfairly singled out by them over its Russian oil purchases when they both trade extensively with Moscow despite the war in Ukraine.