

# India has agreed to drop all import tariffs for me: Trump

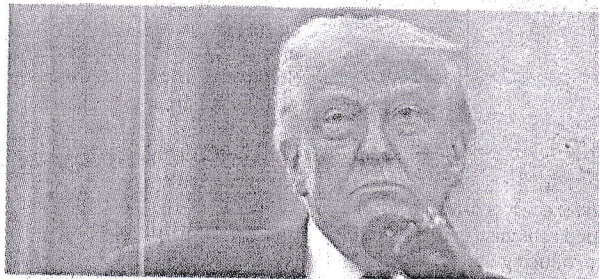
**DEAL NOT DONE.** No official reaction from New Delhi; talks nowhere near finish line: Sources

**Amiti Sen**  
New Delhi

US President Donald Trump has said that India has agreed to “drop” all import tariffs on American goods as Washington was not going to put up with India’s high tariffs. New Delhi did not come up with any official reaction to the comment while sources said on condition of anonymity that negotiations were nowhere near the finish line.

Trump’s comments were made at a White House media interaction on Tuesday, the same day India and the UK announced the conclusion of their ambitious bilateral free trade agreement (FTA).

“India, as an example, has one of the highest tariffs in the world. We’re not going to put up with that. And they’ve agreed already to drop it. They will drop it to nothing...They would have never



**HARD & FAST.** We’re negotiating with many countries but at the end of this, I’ll set my own deals because I set the deal, said US President Trump REUTERS

done that for anybody else but me,” he said.

#### **DECISION PENDING**

Trade officials from both India and the US are negotiating a bilateral trade agreement (BTA) that, New Delhi hopes, will help it to avoid Trump’s reciprocal tariffs. But no final decisions have been taken, a source tracking the matter said.

On April 2, Trump announced reciprocal tariffs on most countries that have trade surpluses with the US, including India which got

slapped with 26 per cent levies. But he Trump paused the tariffs for 90 days (except a baseline tariff of 10 per cent that continues to be levied) to give time for trade deals.

“India and the US have officially agreed to the terms of reference for the BTA when the US Vice President was in Delhi last month, but there is some way to go before a deal is made,” the source told *businessline*.

#### **NON-TARIFF BARRIERS**

The US is looking at steep tariff cuts or tariff elimina-

tion for products such as automobiles, motorbikes, whisky and agriculture to reduce its trade deficit with India.

It also wants India to address non-tariff barriers which may cover a number of areas such as import barriers, licences, standards and intellectual property.

On Sunday, Trump told reporters that there “could very well be” trade deals announced this week. “We’re negotiating with many countries but at the end of this I’ll set my own deals because I set the deal, they don’t set the deal, I set the deal,” he said. “This is not like a big deal that’s gonna be signed — in some cases we’ll sign them, but we don’t have to sign them. I’ll be setting the deal, I’ll be setting the tariff,” he added.

The Trump administration had earlier indicated that India, Japan and South Korea were the front-runners for a trade deal with the US.