

# Indian team to visit US this week for bilateral trade talks

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi

A team of senior Commerce Ministry officials from India is expected to visit Washington this week to resume talks on the bilateral trade agreement (BTA) as India and the US express optimism of finalising the first phase of the deal by November this year.

"Talks are ongoing in a positive atmosphere. A few instances (of disagreement) during the course of negotiations are bound to be there. Negotiations are ongoing and the first tranche of BTA will be finalised by fall. The Indian team will go to the US this week. Both sides want to fast track it," a senior government official said.

The BTA talks lost momentum in August after the US increased the tariffs by up to 50 per cent on Indian merchandise over charges of the latter financing Russia's war in Ukraine. However, the two sides have come back on the

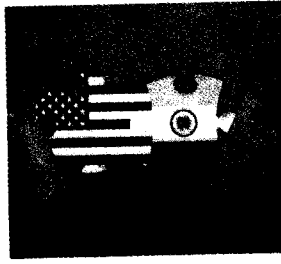


table in the last couple of months as tensions eased.

A team from the North American country visited India last month, which was followed by a trip by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal to the US.

Another official said that India will try to source more energy such as liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane, crude oil, etc from the US as a gesture of appeasement and goodwill provided the pricing is feasible considering India has resource constraints.

India has also assured the US that it will buy more defence goods and equipment from the US. The South

Asian nation has already upped its defence-related procurement from the US in the last few years.

## US ENVOY IN INDIA

The movement in the BTA talks comes as the US Ambassador-Designate Sergio Gor is in New Delhi on a week-long official visit, which concludes on Tuesday (October 14).

Considered close to the US President Donald Trump, Gor is accompanied by Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Michael J Rigas. The US Senate recently confirmed his appointment as the India envoy.

Gor has met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri. The talks centered on bilateral priorities in defence cooperation, trade negotiations and critical minerals supply chain.