

India's Modi To Visit Russia Next Week

By [AFP](#)

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Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. **Prime Minister's Office**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Russia on July 8 and 9, the Kremlin said Thursday. This will be his first trip to the country since Moscow launched its military offensive in Ukraine.

The war has tested relations between Moscow and New Delhi, even though India has ramped up its purchases of Russian oil and not joined its Western allies in leveling sanctions against Russia.

Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin will discuss "prospects for further development of traditionally friendly Russian-Indian relations, as well as relevant issues on the international and regional agenda," the Kremlin said in a statement.

Putin sees Modi as a key potential diplomatic and economic ally, with Russia isolated in the West.

But the war has complicated relations.

In a September 2022 meeting between Putin and Modi at a regional summit in Uzbekistan, the Russian president told Modi he understood he had "concerns" about the conflict and that Modi wanted it to end "as soon as possible."

Earlier this year, India said it was pushing Russia to release some of its citizens who had signed up for "support jobs" with the Russian army, following reports some were left stranded in Russian border towns and forced to fight in Ukraine.

India urged its citizens to "stay away from this conflict."

New Delhi has not been a staunch backer of Kyiv, notably declining to sign a joint statement at a peace summit in Switzerland last month calling for Ukraine's territorial integrity to be respected in any peace agreement.

India has also become a major purchaser of Russian oil, providing a much-needed export market for Russia after it was cut off from traditional markets in the West.

However, there have been reports that Russian exporters have faced payment problems and have been unable to repatriate earnings due to India's capital controls.

Recently re-elected for a historic third term, Modi last visited Russia in September 2019 for an India-Russia annual summit in the far eastern city of Vladivostok.

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