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India set to dazzle Trump

Reuters | New Delhi/Washington

U.S. President Donald Trump will be accorded the biggest public reception given to any foreign leader in years during his visit to India beginning on Monday, officials say, one that could help paper over the two countries' growing friction over trade.

Close political and security partners, India and the United States have hit each other with retaliatory tariffs. Over the past month they have engaged in intense negotiations to produce a mini trade deal, but officials say it remains elusive.

The two sides have been arguing over US demands for access to India's huge poultry and dairy markets, Indian price controls on medical devices such as stents and stringent local data storage rules that US companies say will raise the costs of doing business.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has sought restoration of trade concessions that Trump withdrew in 2019 and greater access to US markets for its pharmaceutical and farm products. Above all, it says that Trump should not treat India on par with China, whose economy is five times larger.

At an event in Las Vegas overnight Trump gave mixed messages about prospects for a trade deal with Modi.

"We're going to India and we may make a tremendous deal there. Maybe we'll slow it down, we'll do it after the election," he said.

Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to gather in Modi's political hometown of Ahmedabad to greet Trump for a road show leading to a rally in a cricket stadium with a capacity of over 100,000.

On stage, both leaders will address a bigger version of the "Howdy Modi" rally that they jointly appeared at in Houston to a jubilant crowd of 50,000 Indian Americans last year, where Trump likened Modi to Elvis Presley for his crowd-pulling power.

"From the moment of their arrival at the airport a little be-



People ride their motorbikes past a hoarding with the images of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump installed next to decorated trees alongside a road ahead of Trump's visit, in Ahmedabad, India



Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel stand guard outside Sardar Patel Gujarat Stadium, where US President Donald Trump is scheduled to address a "Namaste Trump" event with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit in Ahmedabad, India

fore noon on 24th February, the delegates will be treated to a display of famed Indian hospitality and India's Unity in Diversity," said Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla.

He said there will be tens of thousands of ordinary citizens as well as artistes showcasing the performing arts from different states of the country as part of

the India Road Show.

Trump, who will be accompanied by his wife, Melania, on the two-day trip, has been fascinated with the idea of going to India since his visit to Houston, aides said.

Trump prides himself in having large crowds at his campaign rallies, ranging generally from 10,000 to 20,000 people, and has

expressed admiration privately at the size of the crowd awaiting him in India, they said.

Modest Trade Deal

It was possible the two sides could still announce some specific trade measures absent a broader deal, Richard M. Rossow, an India expert at the Center for Strategic and Inter-



A member of a bomb disposal squad from Gujarat Police uses a sniffer dog to scan the stands at Sardar Patel Gujarat Stadium



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DONALD TRUMP

hurt the government's domestic base so dramatically."

These could include a further reduction in import tariffs on Harley-Davidson motorcycles that Trump has often spoken about, he said.

The two countries are also expected to announce India's purchase of 24 SeaHawk naval helicopters from Lockheed Martin in a deal estimated to be \$2.6 billion as well as a follow-on order for six Apache attack helicopters.

The United States has become one of India's top arms suppliers, with \$18 billion worth of sales over the last 15 years, edging out traditional supplier Russia.

Trump and Modi are expected to discuss a wide range of issues including trade, 5G telecoms, counter-terrorism, energy security, religious freedom, the rule of law and the importance of the Indo-Pacific region, a senior Trump administration official said.

US energy firm Westinghouse is also expected to sign a new agreement with state-run Nuclear Power Corporation of India for the supply of six nuclear reactors, kickstarting a long-running project.

national Studies, told reporters. "There's a modest package of things that India could put on the table that I don't think would

Viral video prompts outpouring for bullied Australian boy

Support for the boy built as the video spread online

Sydney

An Australian boy with dwarfism who was bullied to the point he wanted to "die right now" has received a deluge of celebrity messages and donations for a trip to Disneyland.

A video of nine-year-old Quaden Bayles uploaded to Facebook by his mother showed him crying and repeatedly say-



Australian actor Hugh Jackman was among the hundreds of thousands posting support for a bullied Australian boy

The clip had been watched more than 16 million times by Friday and the boy's mother, Yarraka Bayles, said she was sharing it to raise awareness of the impact bullying was having on her child.

ing he wanted to die after being bullied at school.

The clip had been watched more than 16 million times by Friday and the boy's mother, Yarraka Bayles, said she was sharing it to raise awareness of

the impact bullying was having on her child.

"I've got a son that is suicidal almost every single day," she says in the footage.

Support for the boy built as the video spread online, and a GoFundMe page started by US comedian Brad Williams had raised over \$150,000 to give Bayles a trip to Disneyland in California by Friday.

"This isn't just for Quaden, this is for anyone who has been bullied in their lives and told they weren't good enough," Williams, who was also born with achondroplasia -- the most common type of dwarfism -- wrote

on the fundraiser page.

Williams said extra funds would be given to anti-bullying charities.

Australian actor Hugh Jackman and NBA player Enes Kanter were among the hundreds of thousands posting support for Bayles.

"Quaden you are stronger than you know, mate. And no matter what, you have a friend in me," Jackman said in a video posted to his Twitter account.

Bayles will also lead the Indignous All-Stars out onto the field in their rugby league clash with the Maori All Stars in Queensland on Saturday.