

## **PM Modi, Donald Trump would be a 'natural fit': Top Republican leader Newt Gingrich**

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**Cleveland (US):** Former House speaker Newt Gingrich on Tuesday said Republican Party's Presidential nominee Donald Trump is a "natural partner" for Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

### **Newt Gingrich**

Gingrich, likely to land a senior position in a Trump administration, said that the two leaders will take relationship between the two largest democracies to a new high and make the world a safer and better place,

"Trump (as president) would be a very tough defender of the United States. Mr Modi is a very tough defender of India. Both understand they are trying to achieve things for their own countries and getting to the deal," former Speaker of the US House of Representatives Newt Gingrich said during a breakfast organised by the Republican Hindu Coalition.

Gingrich, a close confidant of the Republican presidential nominee, said Trump is a natural dealmaker, while Modi believes how to get people to come together.

"They both know how to negotiate. I think people would be shocked when Trump is president, sitting in a room negotiating and getting two world leaders in working things out. So I think, both are very self-confident. They would both enjoy each other," Gingrich said to a question.

Gingrich was one of few top American politicians to have established a relationship with Modi when he was Gujarat chief minister.

"Prime Minister Modi is a career politician, who is the most successful advocate for entrepreneur and free enterprise in India. Look at his record in Gujarat, a real remarkable thing. Look what he is trying to do in Delhi. He is working very hard to have less bureaucracy, less red tape...he gets the system of free enterprise and create wealth. In essence, he is a very unusual career politician," Gingrich said.

The former House Speaker said he is encouraged by the recent visit of Modi to Washington, and his address to the joint session of Congress.

"Here you have the world's largest democracy and the world's most powerful democracy coming together in a way that is very very important and vital to the future of Asia and to the world," he said.

Gingrich said there is a real risk of Pakistan's nuclear weapons falling into wrong hands and thus the need to secure its stockpile now estimated to be around 200 warheads. Early this year, Gingrich had helped create the Republican Hindu Coalition (RHC) which has been formed on the lines of Republican Jewish Coalition.

RHC is headed by Chicago-based Shalabh "Shalli" Kumar. He acknowledged that not many Indian Americans have been invited to the four-day Republican National Convention here. "It is a mistake," Gingrich said when pointed out that so far not a single Indian American has been listed as a speaker. "There is a lot of talent in Indian Americans," he said.

Meanwhile, Trump officially became the Republican Party's presidential nominee on Tuesday after a roll call vote overshadowed by dissent and apathy. Trump sailed to the 1,237-delegate threshold, with his home state of New York putting him over the top. The results were declared on the second day of the Republican National Convention (RNC) here after Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr., announced the 89 delegates that formally clinched the nomination.

- With PTI Inputs