

THE GLOBAL EYE

DIGITAL NEWS MAGAZINE



BIDEN HARRIS

FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF



Today, January 20, 2021, administration and the key we begin a new chapter as Joe cabinet appointees in their Biden and Kamala Harris are government.

sworn in as the President and Vice President of the United States-a powerful day that holds a special meaning for many Americans.

In this issue, our Cover Story is on BIDEN HARRIS Administration. Parthiban Shanmugam, Digital Director of BIDEN HARRIS Campaign of Democratic National Committee has compiled a detailed biographical sketch of both President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. Our Cover story also includes details of the inauguration, the proposed initiatives of the first 100 days of the BIDEN HARRIS both the House and Senate. \

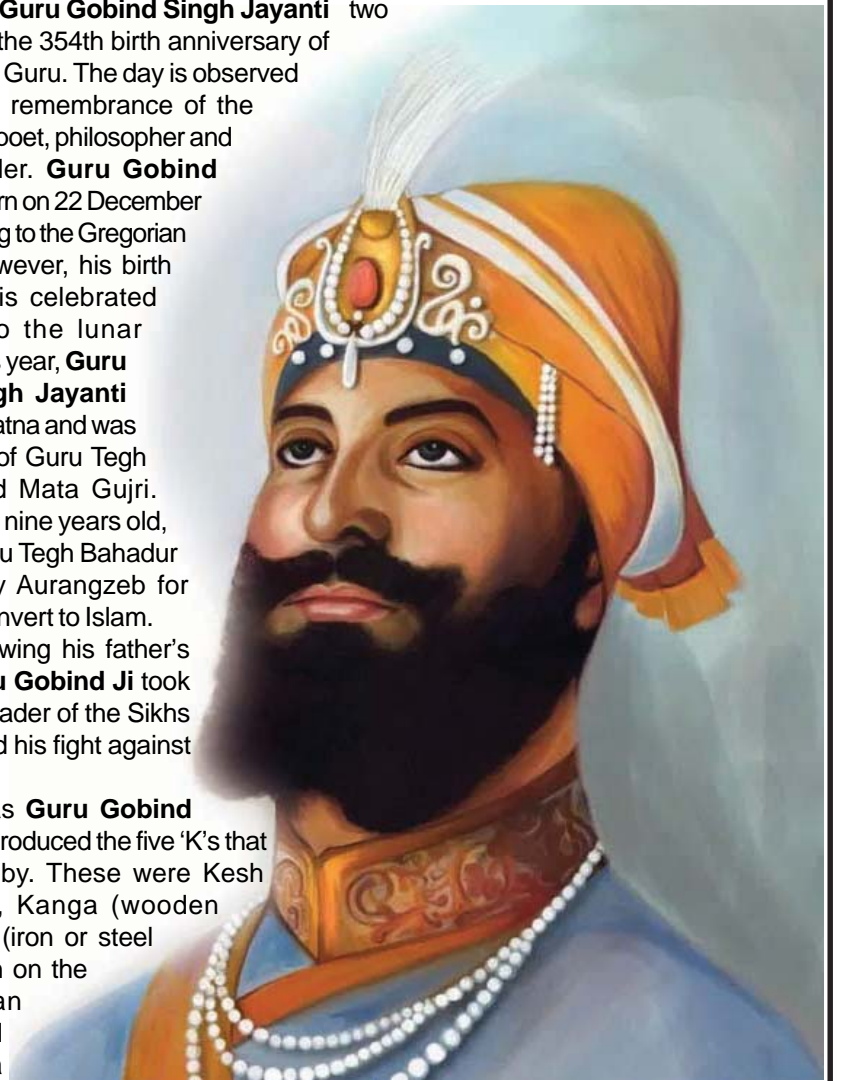
For me personally, today is indeed historic to see KAMALA HARRIS as United States's Vice President, being the First Woman, First Asian, First Indian American and First Person of Tamil origin ever to hold this high office. President Joe Biden has appointed several Indian Americans in his new administration, nearly twenty or more. This is a good start but our hope is that the BIDEN HARRIS administration will charter a new course for the country in the next four years. It is a golden opportunity for the Democrats as for the next two years they will control

Today is also **Guru Gobind Singh Jayanti** two which marks the 354th birth anniversary of the tenth Sikh Guru. The day is observed in honor and remembrance of the great warrior, poet, philosopher and spiritual leader. **Guru Gobind Singh** was born on 22 December 1666 according to the Gregorian calendar. However, his birth anniversary is celebrated according to the lunar calendar. This year, **Guru Gobind Singh Jayanti** was born in Patna and was the only son of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mata Gujri. When he was nine years old, his father Guru Tegh Bahadur was killed by Aurangzeb for refusing to convert to Islam.

Following his father's demise, **Guru Gobind Ji** took over as the leader of the Sikhs and continued his fight against the Mughals.

It was **Guru Gobind Singh** who introduced the five 'K's that Sikhs abide by. These were Kesh (uncut hair), Kanga (wooden comb), Kara (iron or steel bracelet worn on the wrist), Kirpan (sword) and Kacchera (breeches). He also declared the Holy Scriptures of Guru Granth Sahib as the permanent Guru of Sikhs. He passed away in 1708.

To commemorate this occasion, we have covered in-depth India's **Prime Minister Modi's** special relationship with the Sikhs in our Spotlight section. We trust that our readers will enjoy this special edition of **THE GLOBAL EYE** being brought on these



important occasions. Thanks for your continued overwhelming response that makes **THE GLOBAL EYE**, your favourite Digital News Magazine.

Prabhakar

CONTENT

Biden gets second dose of vaccine as team readies COVID-19 plan

Page 19

Bhutan PM wishes Modi for launching world's largest COVID-19 vaccination drive

Page 23

Too much democracy for mandarins?

Page 24

A new beginning with President Biden and Vice President Harris

Page 35

Priyanka Chopra is excited as The White Tiger makers send her name for awards season in Best Supporting Actress category

Page 58

Letters to the Editor

Global eye is very colorful and pleasing to the eyes. Your coverage of Covid vaccine is very informative. Overall excellent articles covering all aspects.

Dr C . Velayudham Pillai
Chennai

Wonderful issue of Global Eye. Thank you for so clearly explaining the Farmers bills. I am sharing your magazine to many from my side.

Acharya Nilamegame
Reunion Islands, France

A very impressive speech by our Honorable PM Modi ji in India Ideas Summit and Global Week 2020. Lot of information to know.

Mani9944

The public service MAFS announcement of student scholarship is very great. All the corporates have to give something back to the country so that bright students will be benefited.

Prasanth Reddy
Vijayawada

Very much need Tiru O Panneerselvam as CM of Tamilnadu in 2021. we all work together for that.

Sona_mahi

Amazing colourful issue. Thank you Global eye for sending the new edition.

Manoj Singh

Good information with good articles.

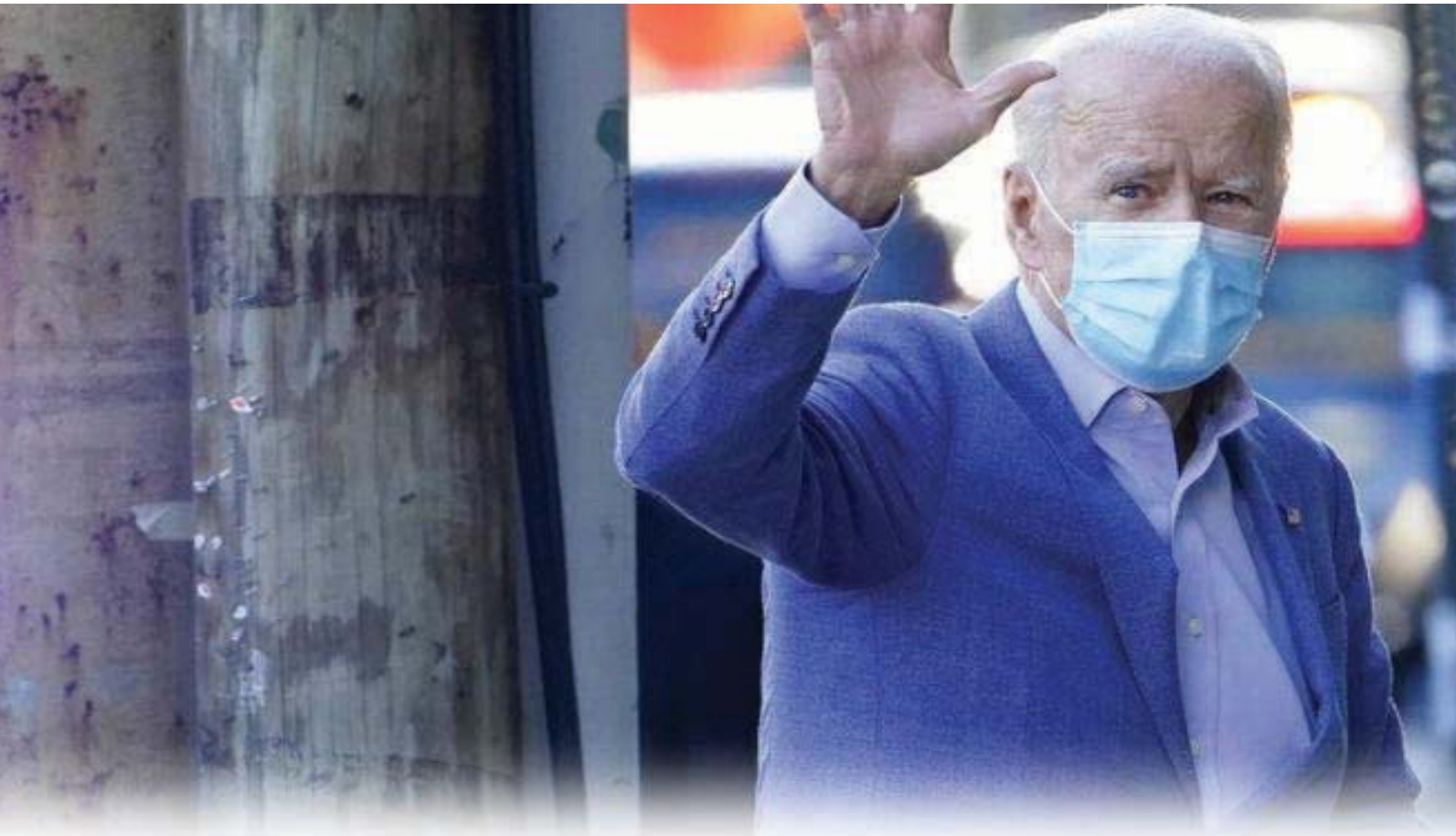
Shamik

Respected Editor,
I'm Srujan from Delhi. I want to meet the editor to discuss the few things about the current Government and the policies. I would like to meet anytime the editor prefers.

Satish Menon

Team, From few days, Travel section and Science and Technology, Gadgets missing. Please include those sections also else this is like the only political magazine.

Divakar



Biden inauguration theme: 'America United'

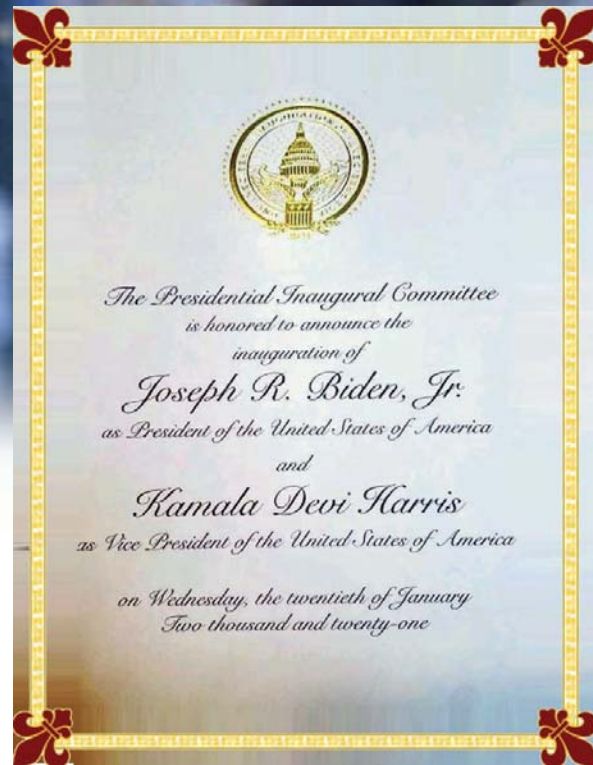
The theme for President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration will be "America United," an issue that's long been a central focus for Biden but one that's taken on added weight in the wake of the violence at the US Capitol last week. In an announcement shared first with The Associated Press, the Presidential Inaugural Committee said that the theme "reflects the beginning of a new national journey that restores the soul of America, brings the country together, and creates a path to a brighter future. In keeping with the theme of unity, the committee also announced that after he is officially inaugurated, Biden, Vice President-elect Harris and their spouses will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, and will be joined there by former Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton and their wives.

The theme reflects the beginning of a new national journey that restores the soul of America, brings the country together, and creates a path to a brighter future, the inaugural committee said.

It will be one of Biden's first acts as president, and a show of bipartisanship at a time when the national divide is on stark display. The focus on unity has characterized Biden's presidential run from the start, and he's said repeatedly since winning the White House he sees unifying the country as one of his top priorities as president. But the scope — and urgency — of the challenge Biden faces became even clearer this week after President Donald Trump sparked an armed insurrection at the Capitol, spurred by his repeated attempts to delegitimize Biden's win. Trump himself is skipping Biden's inaugural, a decision Biden said was a

"good thing," though Vice President Mike Pence and his wife plan to attend. "This inauguration marks a new chapter for the American people — one of healing, of unifying, of coming together, of an America united," said PIC CEO Dr. Tony Allen. "It is time to turn the page on this era of division.

The inaugural activities will reflect our shared values and serve as a reminder that we are stronger together than we are apart, just as our motto *e pluribus unum* reminds us -- out of many, one." The committee also announced plans for a major public art display spanning multiple blocks of the National Mall that will feature 191,500 US flags and 56 pillars of light, to represent every US state and territory.



After Biden asked Americans to stay home for his inauguration, the "Field of Flags" is meant to represent "the American people who are unable to travel" to the Capitol to celebrate his swearing-in, according to the committee. It's not the only COVID-era change to the festivities. In keeping with crowd-size restrictions to slow the spread of the virus, Biden will have a significantly pared-down inauguration, with traditional activities like the parade and the inaugural balls moving to a virtual format. But even as the celebration itself will be smaller, inauguration officials are preparing a significant security presence in preparation for what may be more pro-Trump demonstrations across Washington.

Kamala Harris to be sworn in as US Vice President by Justice Sonia Sotomayor



The 58-year-old vice president-elect was inspired by Justice Sotomayor's background, ABC News reported, ahead of the presidential inauguration event on January 20.

WASHINGTON: Vice President-elect Kamala Harris will be sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor on Wednesday, a history-making event in which the first Black, South Asian and female vice president will take her oath of office from the first Latina justice. Harris chose Sotomayor for the task, according to a person familiar with the decision. She'll also use two Bibles for the swearing-in, one of which belonged to Thurgood Marshall, the first Black Supreme Court justice. ABC News first reported the latest details of Harris' inauguration plans.

Harris has expressed admiration for both Sotomayor and Marshall. She and Sotomayor share experience as prosecutors, and she once called Marshall — like Harris, a graduate of Howard University — one of her "greatest heroes." The vice president-elect said in a video posted to Twitter that she viewed Marshall as "one of the main reasons I wanted to be a lawyer," calling him "a fighter" in the courtroom. And this will be the second time Sotomayor takes part in an inauguration. She swore in President-elect Joe Biden as vice president in 2013.

Mike Pence calls Kamala Harris to offer congratulations



Vice President Mike Pence has called his soon-to-be successor Kamala Harris to offer his congratulations, according to two people familiar with the conversation.

Washington: It's the first known contact between the elected members of the outgoing and incoming administrations. President Donald Trump has not reached out to President-elect Joe Biden and has repeatedly questioned the legitimacy of Biden's win. One of the people familiar with the Thursday afternoon conversation described it as a "good call," with Pence congratulating his successor and offering assistance. They spoke on

condition of anonymity to describe the private conversation. The call came less than a week before Biden and Harris take office on Jan. 20 and just over a week after the storming of the Capitol by Trump's supporters. While Trump has remained largely behind closed doors fuming since his loss, Pence has been stepping up and fulfilling many of the ceremonial duties of the presidency, including greeting members of the National Guard now protecting the Capitol building Thursday evening. Pence will also be attending Biden's Jan. 20 inauguration, which Trump is refusing to attend.



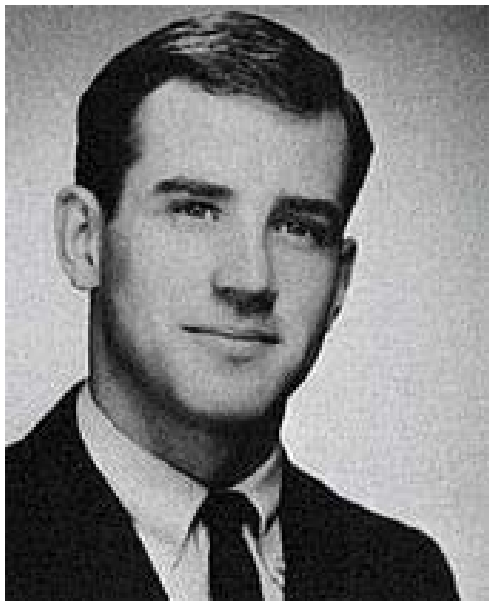
Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. was born November 20, 1942, at St. Mary's Hospital in Scranton, Pennsylvania, to Catherine Eugenia "Jean" Biden (née Finnegan) and Joseph Robinette Biden Sr.. The oldest child in a Catholic family, he has a sister, Valerie, and two brothers, Francis and James. Jean was of Irish descent, while Joseph Sr. had English, French, and Irish ancestry. Biden's father was initially wealthy but suffered financial setbacks around the time Biden was born, and for several years the family lived with Biden's maternal grandparents. Scranton fell into economic decline during the 1950s and Biden's father could not find steady work. Beginning in 1953, the family lived in an apartment in Claymont, Delaware, then moved to a house in Wilmington, Delaware. Biden Sr. later became a successful used car salesman, maintaining the family in a middle-class lifestyle. At Archmere Academy in Claymont, Biden was a standout halfback and wide receiver on the high school football team; he also played baseball. Though a poor student, he was class president in his junior and senior years. He graduated in 1961.

At the University of Delaware in Newark, Biden briefly played freshman football and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1965 with a double major in history and political science, and a minor in English. He had a C average and ranked 506th in his class of 688.

Biden has a stutter, which has improved since his early twenties. He says he has reduced it by reciting poetry before a mirror, but it has been suggested that it affected his performance in the 2020 Democratic Party presidential debates.

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On August 27, 1966, Biden married Neilia Hunter (1942–1972), a student at



Joe Biden

Syracuse University, after overcoming her parents' reluctance for her to wed a Roman Catholic; the ceremony was held in a Catholic church in Skaneateles, New York. They had three children: Joseph R. "Beau" Biden III (1969–2015), Robert Hunter Biden (born 1970), and Naomi Christina "Amy" Biden (1971–1972). In 1968, Biden earned a Juris Doctor from Syracuse University College of Law, ranked 76th in his class of 85, and was admitted to the Delaware bar in 1969. While in school, he received student draft deferments, and afterward was classified as unavailable for military service due to asthma.



Compiled by Parthiban Shanmugam
Attorney, Strategic & Defense Analyst,
Human Rights Advocate, Filmmaker

In 1968, Biden clerked at a Wilmington law firm headed by prominent local Republican William Prickett and, he later said, "thought of myself as a Republican". He disliked incumbent Democratic Delaware governor Charles L. Terry's conservative racial politics and supported a more liberal Republican, Russell W. Peterson, who defeated Terry in 1968. Biden was recruited by local Republicans but registered as an Independent because of his distaste for Republican presidential candidate Richard Nixon.

In 1969, Biden practiced law first as a public defender and then at a firm headed by a locally active Democrat who named him to the Democratic Forum, a group trying to reform and revitalize the state party; Biden subsequently reregistered as a Democrat. He and another attorney also formed a law firm. Corporate law, however, did not appeal to him, and criminal law did not pay well. He supplemented his income by managing properties.

In 1970, Biden ran for the 4th District Seat on the New Castle County Council on a liberal platform that included support for public housing in the suburbs. The seat had been held by Republican Henry R. Folsom, who was running in the 5th District following a reapportionment of council districts. Biden won the general election, and took office on January 5, 1971. He served until January 1, 1973, and was succeeded by Democrat Francis R. Swift. During his time on the county council, Biden opposed large highway projects he argued might disrupt Wilmington neighborhoods.

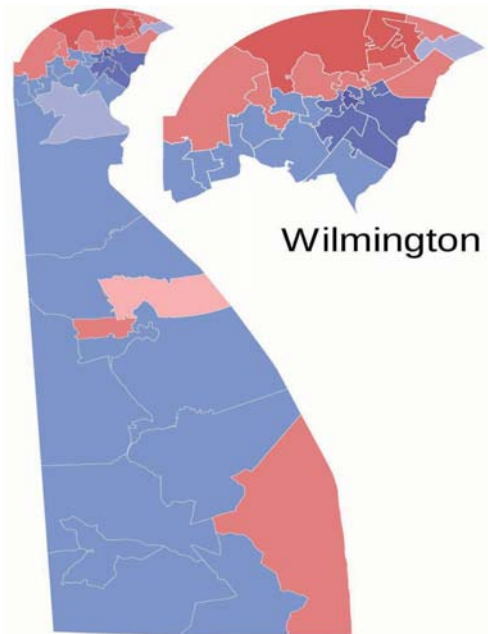
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In 1972, Biden defeated Republican incumbent J. Caleb Boggs to become the junior U.S. senator from Delaware. He was the only Democrat willing to chal-

lenge Boggs. His campaign had almost no money, and he was given no chance of winning. Family members managed and staffed the campaign, which relied on meeting voters face-to-face and hand-distributing position papers, an approach made feasible by Delaware's small size. He received some help from the AFL-CIO and Democratic pollster Patrick Caddell. His platform focused on withdrawal from Vietnam, the environment, civil rights, mass transit, more equitable taxation, health care, and public dissatisfaction with "politics as usual". A few months before the election Biden trailed Boggs by almost thirty percentage points, but his energy, attractive young family, and ability to connect with voters' emotions worked to his advantage, and he won with 50.5 percent of the vote.

Death of wife and daughter:
On December 18, 1972, a few weeks after the election, Biden's wife Neilia and one-year-old daughter Naomi were killed in an automobile accident while Christmas shopping in Hockessin, Delaware. Neilia's station wagon was hit by a tractor-trailer truck as she pulled out from an intersection. Their sons Beau and Hunter survived the accident and were taken to the hospital in fair condition, Beau with a broken leg and other wounds, and Hunter with a minor skull fracture and other head injuries. Doctors soon said both would make full recoveries. Biden considered resigning to care for them, but Senate Majority

Leader Mike Mansfield persuaded him not to. Years later, Biden said he had heard that the truck driver allegedly drank alcohol before the collision. The driver's family denied that claim, and the police never substantiated it. Biden later apologized to the family.



Results of the 1972 U.S. Senate election in Delaware

Biden was sworn in on January 5, 1973, by secretary of the Senate Francis R. Valeo at the Delaware Division of the Wilmington Medical Center. Present were his sons Beau (whose leg was still in traction from the automobile accident) and Hunter and other family members. At 30, he was the sixth-youngest senator in U.S. history.

To see his sons every day, Biden commuted by train between his Delaware home and Washington, D.C.—90 minutes each way—and maintained this habit throughout his 36 years in the Senate. But the accident had filled him with anger and religious doubt. He wrote later that he "felt God had played a horrible trick" on him, and he had trouble focusing on work.

Biden credits his second wife, teacher Jill Tracy Jacobs, with the renewal of his interest in politics and life; they met in 1975 on a blind date and were married at the United Nations chapel in New York on June 17, 1977. They are Roman Catholics and attend Mass at St. Joseph's on the Brandywine in Greenville, Delaware. Their



Biden and his second wife, Jill, met in 1975 and married in 1977



Biden and President Carter

daughter Ashley Blazer (born 1981) is a social worker. Beau Biden became an Army Judge Advocate in Iraq and later Delaware Attorney General he died of brain cancer in 2015. Hunter Biden is a Washington attorney and lobbyist.

From 1991 to 2008, Biden co-taught a seminar on constitutional law at Widener University School of Law. The seminar often had a waiting list. Biden sometimes flew back from overseas to teach the class.

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During his early years in the Senate, Biden focused on consumer protection and environmental issues and called for greater government accountability. In a 1974 interview, he described himself as liberal on civil rights and liberties, senior citizens' concerns and healthcare but conservative on other issues, including abortion and the military conscription. In his first decade in the Senate, Biden focused on arms control. After Congress failed to ratify the SALT II Treaty signed in 1979 by Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev and President Jimmy Carter, Biden met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to communicate American concerns, and secured changes that addressed the Senate Foreign Relations

prehensive Crime Control Act; over time, the law's tough-on-crime provisions became controversial and in 2019, Biden called his role in passing the bill a "big mistake" His supporters praised him for modifying some of the law's worst provisions, and it was his most important legislative accomplishment to that time. This bill included the Federal Assault Weapons Ban and the Violence Against Women Act, which he has called his most significant legislation.

In 1993, Biden voted for a provision that deemed homosexuality incompatible with military life, thereby banning gays from serving in the armed forces. In 1996, he voted for the Defense of Marriage Act, which prohibited the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriages, thereby barring individuals in such marriages from equal protection under federal law and allowing states to do the same.[89] In 2015, the act was ruled unconstitutional in Obergefell v. Hodges.

Opposition to busing

In the mid-1970s, Biden was one of the Senate's leading opponents of race-integration busing. His Delaware constituents strongly opposed it, and such opposition nationwide later led his party to mostly

14th Amendment. In 1975, he supported a proposal that would have prevented the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare from cutting federal funds to districts that refused to integrate; he said busing was a "bankrupt idea [violating] the cardinal rule of common sense" and that his opposition would make it easier for other liberals to follow suit.[81] At the same time he supported initiatives on housing, job opportunities and voting rights. Biden supported a measure[when?] forbidding the use of federal funds for transporting students beyond the school closest to them. In 1977, he co-sponsored an amendment closing loopholes in that measure, which President Carter signed into law in 1978.

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Biden formally declared his candidacy for the 1988 Democratic presidential nomination on June 9, 1987. He was considered a strong candidate because of his moderate image, his speaking ability, his high profile as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee at the upcoming Robert Bork Supreme Court nomination hearings, and his appeal to Baby Boomers; he would have been the second-youngest person elected president, after John F. Kennedy. He raised more in the first quarter of 1987 than any other candidate.

By August his campaign's messaging had become confused due to staff rivalries, and in September, he was accused of plagiarizing a speech by British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock. Biden's speech had similar lines about being the first person in his family to go to university. Biden had credited Kinnock with the formulation on previous occasions,] but did not on two occasions in late August. Earlier that year he had also used passages from a 1967 speech by Robert F. Kennedy (for which his aides took blame) and a short phrase from John F. Kennedy's inaugural address; two years earlier he had used a 1976 passage by Hubert Humphrey. Biden responded that politicians often borrow from one another without giving credit, and that one of his rivals for the nomination, Jesse Jackson, had called him to point out that he (Jackson) had used the same material by Humphrey that Biden had used.

A few days later an incident in law school in which he drew text from a Fordham Law Review article with inadequate citations was publicized. Biden was required to repeat the course and passed with high marks. At Biden's request the Delaware Supreme Court's Board of Professional Responsibility reviewed the incident and concluded that he had violated no rules.

He also made several false or exaggerated claims about his early life: that he had earned three degrees in college, that he had attended law school on a full scholarship, that he had graduated in the top half of his class, and that he had marched in the civil

rights movement. The limited amount of other news about the race amplified these revelations and on September 23, 1987, Biden withdrew from the race, saying his candidacy had been overrun by "the exaggerated shadow" of his past mistakes.

Brain surgeries:

In February 1988, after several episodes of increasingly severe neck pain, Biden was taken by ambulance to Walter Reed Army Medical Center for surgery to correct a leaking intracranial berry aneurysm. While recuperating he suffered a pulmonary embolism, a serious complication.

After a second aneurysm was surgically repaired in May, Biden's recuperation kept him away from the Senate for seven months.



Biden at the White House in 1987

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Biden was a longtime member of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. He chaired it from 1987 to 1995 and was ranking minority member from 1981 to 1987 and from 1995 to 1997.

As chairman, Biden presided over two highly contentious U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearings.[15] When Robert Bork was nominated in 1988, Biden reversed his approval?—?given in an interview the previous year?—?of a hypothetical Bork nomination. Conservatives were angered, but at the hearings' close Biden was praised for his fairness, humor and courage. Rejecting the arguments of some Bork opponents, Biden framed his objections to Bork in terms of the conflict between Bork's strong originalism and the view that the U.S. Constitution provides rights to liberty and privacy beyond those explicitly enumerated in its text. Bork's nomination was rejected in the committee by a 9–5 vote and then in the full Senate, 58–48 vote.

During Clarence Thomas's nomination hearings in 1991, Biden's questions on constitutional issues were often convoluted to the point that Thomas sometimes lost track of them, and Thomas later wrote that Biden's questions had been akin to "beanballs". After the committee hearing closed, the public learned that Anita Hill, a University of Okla-



Biden shaking hands with President Ronald Reagan, 1984

Committee's objections. When the Reagan administration wanted to interpret the 1972 SALT I treaty loosely to allow development of the Strategic Defense Initiative, Biden argued for strict adherence to the treaty. He received considerable attention when he excoriated Secretary of State George Shultz at a Senate hearing for the Reagan administration's support of South Africa despite its continued policy of apartheid.

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Biden became ranking minority member of the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1981. In 1984, he was a Democratic floor manager for the successful passage of the Com-

abandon school integration policies. In his first Senate campaign, Biden had expressed support for busing to remedy de jure segregation, as in the South, but opposed its use to remedy de facto segregation arising from racial patterns of neighborhood residency, as in Delaware; he opposed a proposed constitutional amendment banning busing entirely.

In May 1974, Biden voted to table a proposal containing anti-busing and anti-desegregation clauses but later voted for a modified version containing a qualification that it was not intended to weaken the judiciary's power to enforce the 5th Amendment and



Biden speaking at the signing of the 1994 Crime Bill with President Bill Clinton in 1994



Senator Biden accompanies President Clinton and other officials to Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 1997

homa law school professor, had accused Thomas of making unwelcome sexual comments when they had worked together. Biden had known of some of these charges, but had initially shared them only with the committee because Hill had then been unwilling to testify. The committee hearing was reopened and Hill testified, but Biden did not permit testimony from other witnesses, such as a woman who had made similar charges and experts on harassment; Biden said he wanted to preserve Thomas's privacy and the hearings' decency. The full Senate confirmed Thomas by a 52–48 vote, with Biden opposed. Liberal legal advocates and women's groups felt strongly that Biden had mishandled the hearings and not done enough to support Hill. Biden later sought out women to serve on the Judiciary Committee and emphasized women's issues in the committee's legislative agenda. In 2019, he told Hill he regretted his treatment of her, but Hill said afterward she remained unsatisfied.

Biden was critical of Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr during the 1990s Whitewater controversy and Lewinsky scandal investigations, saying "it's going to be a cold day in hell" before another independent counsel would be granted similar powers. He voted to acquit during the impeachment of President Clinton. During the 2000s, Biden sponsored bankruptcy legislation sought by credit card issuers. President Bill Clinton vetoed the bill in 2000, but it passed in 2005 as the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act, with Biden one of only 18 Democrats to vote for it, while leading Democrats and consumer rights organizations opposed it. As a senator, Biden strongly supported increased Amtrak funding and rail security.

Biden was also a long time member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He became its ranking minority member in 1997, and chaired it from June 2001 to 2003 and 2007 to 2009. His positions were generally liberal internationalist. He collaborated effectively with Republicans and

sometimes went against elements of his own party. During this time he met with at least 150 leaders from 60 countries and international organizations, becoming a well-known Democratic voice on foreign policy.

Biden voted against authorization for the Gulf War in 1991, siding with 45 of the 55 Democratic senators; he said the U.S. was bearing almost all the burden in the anti-Iraq coalition.

Biden became interested in the Yugoslav Wars after hearing about Serb abuses during the Croatian War of Independence in 1991. Once the Bosnian War broke out, Biden was among the first to call for the "lift and strike" policy of lifting the arms embargo, training Bosnian Muslims and supporting them with NATO air strikes, and investigating war crimes. The George H. W. Bush administration and Clinton administration were both reluctant to implement the policy, fearing Balkan entanglement. In April 1993, Biden spent a week in the Balkans and held a tense three-hour meeting with Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević. Biden related that he had told Milošević, "I think you're a damn war criminal and you should be tried as one."

Biden wrote an amendment in 1992 to compel the Bush administration to arm the Bosnians, but deferred in 1994 to a somewhat softer stance the Clinton administration preferred, before signing on the following year to a stronger measure sponsored by Bob Dole and Joe Lieberman. The engagement led to a successful NATO peacekeeping effort. Biden has called his role in affecting Balkans policy in the mid-1990s his "proudest moment in public life" related to foreign policy.

In 1999, during the Kosovo War, Biden supported the 1999 NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. He co-sponsored with John McCain the McCain-Biden Kosovo Resolution, which called on President Clinton to use all necessary force, including ground troops, to confront Milošević over Yugoslav actions toward ethnic Alba-

nians in Kosovo.

Biden was a strong supporter of the 2001 war in Afghanistan, saying, "Whatever it takes, we should do it." As head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Biden said in 2002 that Saddam Hussein was a threat to national security and there was no option but to "eliminate" that threat. In October 2002, he voted in favor of the Authorization for Use of Military Force against Iraq, approving the U.S. invasion of Iraq. As chair of the committee, he assembled a series of witnesses to testify in favor of the authorization. They gave testimony grossly misrepresenting the intent, history and status of Saddam and his secular government, which was an avowed enemy of al-Qaida, and touting Iraq's fictional possession of weapons of mass destruction.

Biden eventually became a critic of the war and viewed his vote and role as a "mistake", but did not push for U.S. withdrawal. He supported the appropriations to pay for the occupation, but argued repeatedly that the war should be internationalized, that more soldiers were needed, and that the Bush administration should "level with the American people" about the cost and length of the conflict.

By late 2006, Biden's stance had shifted considerably, and he opposed the troop surge of 2007, saying General David Petraeus was "dead, flat wrong" in believing the surge could work.[138] Biden instead advocated dividing Iraq into a loose federation of three ethnic states. In November 2006, Biden and Leslie H. Gelb, president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, released a comprehensive strategy to end sectarian violence in Iraq. Rather than continuing the present approach or withdrawing, the plan called for "a third way": federalizing Iraq and giving Kurds, Shiites, and Sunnis "breathing room" in their own regions. In September 2007, a non-binding resolution endorsing such a scheme passed the Senate, but the idea was unfamiliar, had no political constituency, and failed to gain traction. Iraq's political leadership denounced the resolution as de facto partitioning of the country, and the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad issued a statement distancing itself from it.[140] In May 2008, he sharply criticized President George W. Bush for a speech to Israel's Knesset in which he compared some Democrats to Western leaders who appeased Hitler before World War II; Biden called the speech "bullshit", "malarkey", and "outrageous". He later apologized for his language.

Reputation:

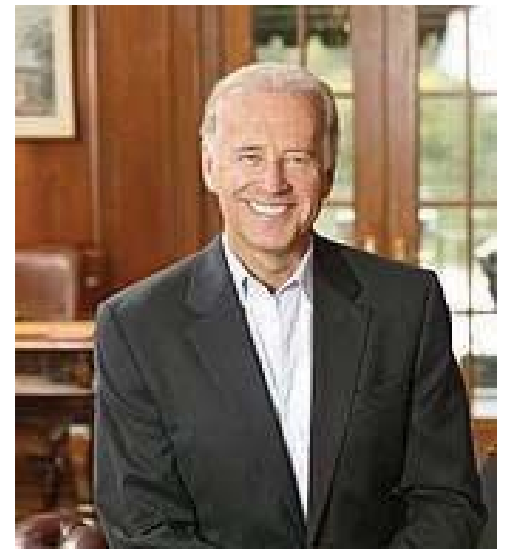
Elected to the Senate in 1972, Biden was reelected in 1978, 1984, 1990, 1996, 2002, and 2008, regularly receiving about 60% of the vote. He was junior senator to William Roth, who was first elected in 1970, until Roth was defeated in 2000. As of 2020 he was the 18th-longest-serving senator in U.S. history.

Biden was consistently ranked one of the least wealthy members of the Senate, which he attributed to his having been elected young. Feeling that less-wealthy public officials may be tempted to accept contributions in exchange for political favors, he proposed campaign finance reform measures during his first term.

The political writer Howard Fineman has written, "Biden is not an academic, he's not a theoretical thinker, he's a great street pol. He comes from a long line of working people in Scranton—auto salesmen, car dealers, people who know how to make a sale. He

has that great Irish gift." Political columnist David S. Broder wrote that Biden has grown over time: "He responds to real people—that's been consistent throughout. And his ability to understand himself and deal with other politicians has gotten much much better." James Traub has written, "Biden is the kind of fundamentally happy person who can be as generous toward others as he is to himself." In 2006, Delaware newspaper columnist Harry F. Thamel wrote that Biden "occupies the sensible center of the Democratic Party".

Wolf Blitzer has described Biden as loquacious. He often deviates from prepared remarks and sometimes "puts his foot in his mouth". The New York Times wrote that Biden's "weak filters make him capable of blurring out pretty much anything".



Official Senate photo, 2005

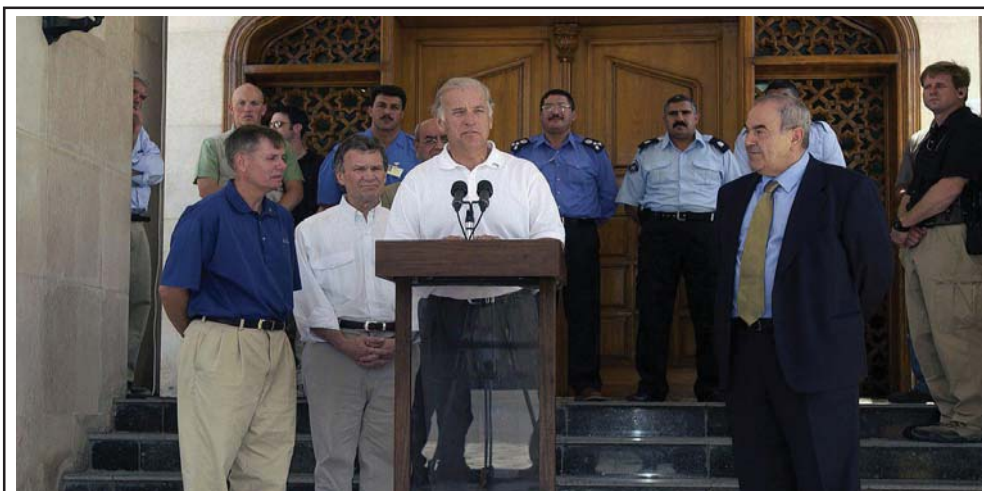
2008 Presidential candidate:

Biden chose not to run for president in 1992 in part because he had voted against authorizing the Gulf War, and did not run in 2004 because, he said, he felt he had little chance of winning and could best serve the country by remaining in the Senate.] In January 2007, he declared his candidacy in the 2008 election.

During his campaign, Biden focused on the Iraq War, his record as chairman of major Senate committees, and his foreign-policy experience. Biden rejected speculation that he might become Secretary of State, focusing on only the presidency. In mid-2007, Biden stressed his foreign policy expertise compared to Obama's, saying of the latter, "I think he can be ready, but right now I don't believe he is. The presidency is not something that lends itself to on-the-job training." Biden also said Obama was copying some of his foreign policy ideas. Biden was noted for his one-liners during the campaign; in one debate he said of Republican candidate Rudy Giuliani: "There's only three things he mentions in a sentence: a noun, and a verb and 9/11." Overall, Biden's debate performances were an effective mixture of humor and sharp and surprisingly disciplined comments.

Biden had difficulty raising funds, struggled to draw people to his rallies, and failed to gain traction against the high-profile candidacies of Obama and Senator Hillary Clinton. He never rose above single digits in national polls of the Democratic candidates. In the first contest on January 3, 2008, Biden placed fifth in the Iowa caucuses, garnering slightly less than one percent of the state delegates. He withdrew from the race that evening.

Despite its lack of success, Biden's 2008 campaign raised his stature in the political world. In particular, it changed the relationship between Biden and Obama. Although they had served together on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, they had not been close: Biden resented Obama's quick rise to political stardom, while Obama viewed Biden as garrulous and patronizing. Having gotten to know each other during 2007, Obama appreciated Biden's cam-



Biden addresses the press after meeting with Prime Minister Ayad Allawi in Baghdad in 2004

paingning style and appeal to working-class voters, and Biden said he became convinced Obama was "the real deal".



Biden campaigns at a house party in Creston, Iowa, July 2007.

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Shortly after Biden withdrew from the presidential race, Obama privately told him he was interested in finding an important place for Biden in his administration. Biden declined Obama's first request to vet him for the vice-presidential slot, fearing the vice presidency would represent a loss in status and voice from his Senate position, but he later changed his mind. In a June 22, 2008 interview, Biden said that while he was not actively seeking the vice-presidential nomination, he would accept it if offered. In early August, Obama and Biden met in secret to discuss the possibility, and developed a strong personal rapport. On August 22, 2008, Obama announced that Biden would be his running mate. The New York Times reported that the strategy behind the choice reflected a desire to fill out the ticket with someone with foreign policy and national security experience—and not to help the ticket win a swing state or to emphasize Obama's "change" message. Others pointed out Biden's appeal to middle-class and blue-collar voters, as well as his willingness to aggressively challenge Republican nominee John McCain in a way that Obama seemed uncomfortable doing at times. In accepting Obama's offer, Biden ruled out running for president again in 2016, but his comments in later years seemed to back off that stance, as he did not want to diminish his political power by appearing uninterested in advancement. Biden was officially nominated for vice president on August 27 by voice vote at the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver.

Biden's vice-presidential campaigning gained little media visibility, as far greater press attention was focused on the Republican running mate, Alaska Governor Sarah Palin. During one week in September 2008, for instance, the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism found that Biden was included in only five percent of coverage of the race, far less than the other three candidates on the tickets received. Biden nevertheless focused on campaigning in economically challenged areas of swing states and trying to win over blue-collar Democrats, especially those who had supported Hillary Clinton. Biden attacked McCain heavily despite a long-standing personal friendship. He said, "That guy I used to know, he's gone. It literally saddens me." As the financial crisis of 2007–2010 reached a peak with the liquidity crisis of September 2008 and the proposed bailout of the United States financial system became a major factor in the campaign, Biden voted in favor of the \$700 billion Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, which went on to pass in the Senate 74–25.

On October 2, 2008, Biden participated in the vice-presidential debate with Palin at Washington University in St. Louis. Post-debate polls found that while Palin exceeded many voters' expectations, Biden had won the debate overall. During the

campaign's final days, he focused on less populated, older, less well-off areas of battleground states, especially Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, where polling indicated he was popular and where Obama had not campaigned or performed well in the Democratic primaries. He also campaigned in some normally Republican states, as well as in areas with large Catholic populations.

Under instructions from the campaign, Biden kept his speeches succinct and tried to avoid offhand remarks, such as one about Obama's being tested by a foreign power soon after taking office, which had attracted negative attention. Privately, Biden's remarks frustrated Obama. "How many times is Biden gonna say something stupid?" he asked. Obama campaign staffers referred to Biden blunders as "Joe bombs" and kept Biden uninformed about strategy discussions, which in turn irked Biden. Relations between the two campaigns became strained for a month, until Biden apologized on a call to Obama and the two built a stronger partnership. Publicly, Obama strategist David Axelrod said Biden's high popularity ratings had outweighed any unexpected comments. Nationally, Biden had a 60% favorability rating in a Pew Research Center poll, compared to Palin's 44%.

On November 4, 2008, Obama and Biden were elected with 53% of the popular vote and 365 electoral votes to McCain–Palin's 178.

Biden ran for reelection to his Senate seat as well as for vice president, as permitted by Delaware law. On November 4, he was also reelected to the Senate, defeating Republican Christine O'Donnell. Having won both races, Biden made a point of holding off his resignation from the Senate so he could be sworn in for his seventh term on January 6, 2009. He became the youngest senator ever to start a seventh full term, and said, "In all my life, the greatest honor bestowed upon me has been serving the people of Delaware as their United States senator." Biden cast his last Senate vote on January 15, supporting the release of the second \$350 billion for the Troubled Asset Relief Program, and resigned from the Senate later that day. In an emotional farewell, Biden told the Senate: "Every good thing I have seen happen here, every bold step taken in the 36-plus years I have been here, came not from the application of pressure by interest groups, but through the maturation of personal relationships." Delaware Governor Ruth Ann Minner appointed longtime Biden adviser Ted Kaufman to fill Biden's vacated Senate seat.

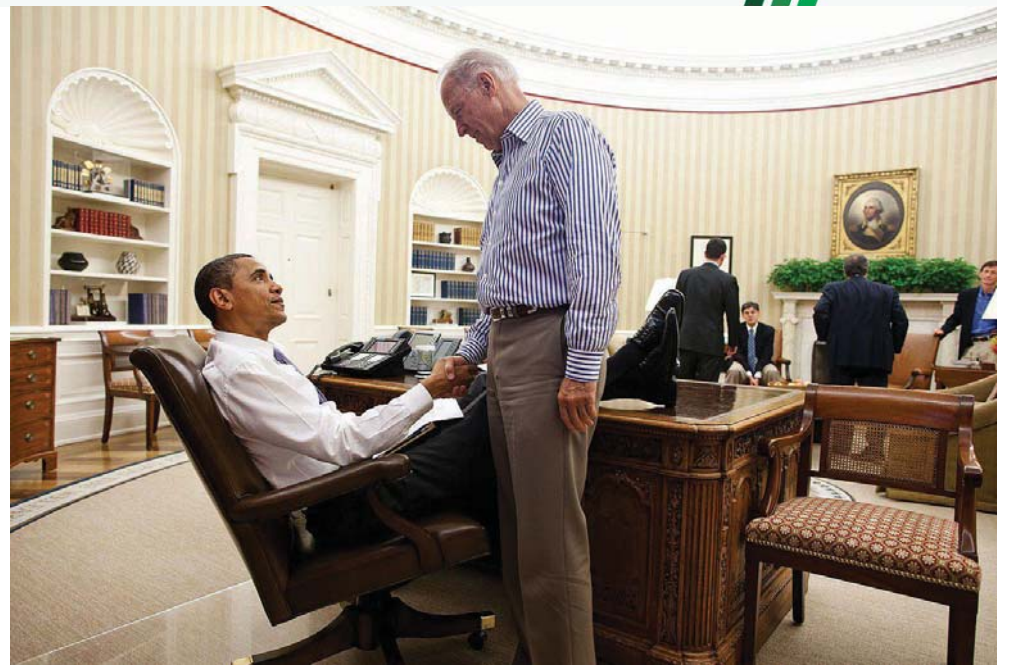


Biden speaks at the August 23, 2008, vice presidential announcement at the Old State Capitol in Springfield, Illinois

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Vice President

Biden said he intended to eliminate some of the explicit roles assumed by George W. Bush's vice president, Dick Cheney, and did not intend to emulate any previous vice presidency. He chaired Obama's transition team[198] and headed an initiative to im-



President Obama congratulates Biden for his role in shaping the debt ceiling deal which led to the Budget Control Act of 2011

prove middle-class economic well-being. In early January 2009, in his last act as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, he visited the leaders of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and on January 20 he was sworn in as the 47th vice president of the United States[—?the first vice president from Delaware[202] and the first Roman Catholic vice president.

Obama was soon comparing Biden to a basketball player "who does a bunch of things that don't show up in the stat sheet". In May, Biden visited Kosovo and affirmed the U.S. position that its "independence is irreversible". Biden lost an internal debate to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton about sending 21,000 new troops to Afghanistan, but his skepticism was valued, and in 2009, Biden's views gained more influence as Obama reconsidered his Afghanistan strategy. Biden visited Iraq about every two months, becoming the administration's point man in delivering messages to Iraqi leadership about expected progress there. More generally, overseeing Iraq policy became Biden's responsibility: Obama was said to have said, "Joe, you do Iraq." Biden said Iraq "could be one of the great achievements of this administration". His January 2010 visit to Iraq in the midst of turmoil over banned candidates from the upcoming Iraqi parliamentary election resulted in 59 of the several hundred candidates being reinstated by the Iraqi government two days later. By 2012, Biden had made eight trips there, but his oversight of U.S. policy in Iraq receded with the exit of U.S. troops in 2011.

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Biden was also in charge of overseeing infrastructure spending from the Obama stimulus package intended to help counteract the ongoing recession, and stressed that only worthy projects should get fund-

ing. He talked with hundreds of governors, mayors, and other local officials in this role. During this period, Biden was satisfied that no major instances of waste or corruption had occurred, and when he completed that role in February 2011, he said the number of fraud incidents with stimulus monies had been less than one percent.

In late April 2009, Biden's off-message response to a question during the beginning of the swine flu outbreak, that he would advise family members against traveling on airplanes or subways, led to a swift retraction by the White House. The remark revived Biden's reputation for gaffes. Confronted with rising unemployment through July 2009, Biden acknowledged that the administration had "misread how bad the economy was" but maintained confidence the stimulus package would create many more jobs once the pace of expenditures picked up. On March 23, 2010, a microphone picked up Biden telling the president that his signing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was "a big fucking deal" during live national news telecasts. White House press secretary Robert Gibbs replied on Twitter, "And yes Mr. Vice President, you're right ...". Despite their different personalities, Obama and Biden formed a friendship, partly based around Obama's daughter Sasha and Biden's granddaughter Maisy, who attended Sidwell Friends School together.

Members of the Obama administration said Biden's role in the White House was to be a contrarian and force others to defend their positions. Rahm Emanuel, White House chief of staff, said that Biden helped counter groupthink. White House press secretary Jay Carney, Biden's former communications director, said Biden played the role of "the bad guy in the Situation Room". Another senior Obama advisor said



Biden, Obama and the national security team gathered in the White House Situation Room to monitor the progress of the May 2011 mission to kill Osama bin Laden

Biden "is always prepared to be the skunk at the family picnic to make sure we are as intellectually honest as possible." Obama said, "The best thing about Joe is that when we get everybody together, he really forces people to think and defend their positions, to look at things from every angle, and that is very valuable for me." On June 11, 2010, Biden represented the United States at the opening ceremony of the World Cup, attended the England v. U.S. game, and visited Egypt, Kenya, and South Africa. The Bidens maintained a relaxed atmosphere at their official residence in Washington, often entertaining their grandchildren, and regularly returned to their home in Delaware.

Biden campaigned heavily for Democrats in the 2010 midterm elections, maintaining an attitude of optimism in the face of predictions of large-scale losses for the party. Following big Republican gains in the elections and the departure of White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel, Biden's past relationships with Republicans in Congress became more important. He led the successful administration effort to gain Senate approval for the New START treaty. In December 2010, Biden's advocacy for a middle ground, followed by his negotiations with Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell, were instrumental in producing the administration's compromise tax package that included a temporary extension of the Bush tax cuts. Biden then took the lead in trying to sell the agreement to a reluctant Democratic caucus in Congress. The package passed as the Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010.

In foreign policy, Biden supported the NATO-led military intervention in Libya in 2011. He supported closer economic ties with Russia.

In March 2011, Obama delegated Biden to lead negotiations between Congress and the White House in resolving federal spending levels for the rest of the year and avoiding a government shutdown. By May 2011, a "Biden panel" with six congressional members was trying to reach a bipartisan deal on raising the U.S. debt ceiling as part of an overall deficit reduction plan. The U.S. debt ceiling crisis developed over the next few months, but Biden's relationship with McConnell again proved key in breaking a deadlock and bringing about a deal to resolve it, in the form of the Budget Control Act of 2011, signed on August 2, 2011, the same day an unprecedented U.S. default had loomed. Biden had spent the most time bargaining with Congress on the debt question of anyone in the administration, and one Republican staffer said, "Biden's the only guy with real negotiating authority, and [McConnell] knows that his word is good. He was a key to the deal."

Some reports suggest that Biden opposed to going forward with the May 2011 U.S. mission to kill Osama bin Laden, lest failure adversely affect Obama's re-election prospects. He took the lead in notifying Congressional leaders of the successful outcome.

Re-election:

In October 2010, Biden said Obama had asked him to remain as his running mate for the 2012 presidential election, but with Obama's popularity on the decline, White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley conducted some secret polling and focus group research in late 2011 on the idea of replacing Biden on the ticket with Hillary Clinton. The notion was dropped when the results

showed no appreciable improvement for Obama, and White House officials later said Obama had never entertained the idea.

Biden's May 2012 statement that he was "absolutely comfortable" with same-sex marriage gained considerable public attention in comparison to Obama's position, which had been described as "evolving". Biden made his statement without administration consent, and Obama and his aides were quite irked, since Obama had planned to shift position several months later, in the build-up to the party convention, and since Biden had previously counselled the president to avoid the issue lest key Catholic voters be offended. Gay rights advocates seized upon Biden's statement, and within days, Obama announced that he too supported same-sex marriage, an action in part forced by Biden's unexpected remarks. Biden apologized to Obama in private for having spoken out, while Obama acknowledged publicly it had been done from the heart. The incident showed that Biden still struggled at times with message discipline, as Time wrote, "Everyone knows Biden's greatest strength is also his greatest weakness." Relations were also strained between the campaigns when Biden appeared to use his position to bolster fundraising contacts for a possible run for president in 2016, and he ended up being excluded from Obama campaign strategy meetings.

The Obama campaign nevertheless still valued Biden as a retail-level politician who could connect with disaffected, blue-collar workers and rural residents, and he had a heavy schedule of appearances in swing states as the Obama reelection campaign began in earnest in spring 2012. An August 2012 remark before a mixed-race audience that Republican proposals to relax Wall Street regulations would "put y'all back in chains" led to a similar analysis of Biden's face-to-face campaigning abilities versus his tendency to go off track. The Los Angeles Times wrote, "Most candidates give the same stump speech over and over, putting reporters if not the audience to sleep. But during any Biden speech, there might be a dozen moments to make press handlers cringe, and prompt reporters to turn to each other with amusement and confusion." Time magazine wrote that Biden often went too far and "Along with the familiar Washington mix of neediness and overconfidence, Biden's brain is wired for more than the usual amount of goofiness."

Biden was nominated for a second term as vice president at the 2012 Democratic National Convention in September. Debating his Republican counterpart, Representative Paul Ryan, in the vice-presidential debate on October 11 he made a spirited and emotional defense of the Obama administration's record and energetically attacked the Republican ticket. On November 6, Obama and Biden were reelected[256] with 332 of 538 Electoral College votes and 51% of the popular vote.

In December 2012, Obama named Biden to head the Gun Violence Task Force, created to address the causes of gun violence in the United States in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. Later that month, during the final days before the United States fell off the "fiscal cliff", Biden's relationship with McConnell once more proved important as the two negotiated a deal that led to the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 being passed at the start of 2013. It made many of the Bush tax cuts permanent but raised rates on upper income levels.



Biden with Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, March 9, 2016



Biden with Vice President-elect Mike Pence on November 10, 2016



Biden and Obama, July 2012
Second Term

Biden was inaugurated to a second term on January 20, 2013, at a small ceremony at Number One Observatory Circle, his official residence, with Justice Sonia Sotomayor presiding (a

public ceremony took place on January 21.) He continued to be in the forefront as, in the wake of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, the Obama administration put forth executive orders and proposed new gun control measures (they failed to pass). Biden played little part in discussions that led to the October 2013 passage of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2014, which resolved the federal government shutdown of 2013 and the debt-ceiling crisis of 2013. This was because Senate majority leader Harry Reid and other Democratic leaders cut him out of any direct talks with Congress, feeling Biden had given too much away during previous negotiations.

Biden's Violence Against



Biden with Chuck Schumer, Barack Obama and President Donald Trump, January 2017

Women Act was reauthorized again in 2013. The act led to related developments, such as the White House Council on Women and Girls, begun in the first term, as well as the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, begun in January 2014 with Biden and Valerie Jarrett as co-chairs. Biden discussed federal guidelines on sexual assault on university campuses while giving a speech at the University of New Hampshire. He said, "No means no, if you're drunk or you're sober. No means no if you're in bed, in a dorm or on the street. No means no even if you said yes at first and you changed your mind. No means no."

Biden favored arming Syria's rebel fighters. As Iraq fell apart during 2014, renewed attention was paid to the Biden-Gelb Iraqi federalization plan of 2006, with some observers suggesting Biden had been right all along. Biden himself said the U.S. would follow ISIL "to the gates of hell". On December 8, 2015, Biden spoke in Ukraine's parliament in Kyiv in one of his many visits to set U.S. aid and policy stance on Ukraine. Biden had close relationships with several Latin American leaders and was assigned a focus on the region during the administration; he visited the region 16 times during his vice presidency, the most of any president or vice president.

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In 2015, Speaker of the House John Boehner and Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell invited Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to address a joint session of Congress without notifying the Obama administration. This defiance of protocol led Biden and more than 50 congressional Democrats to skip Netanyahu's speech. In August 2016, Biden visited Serbia, where he met with Serbian president Aleksandar Vucic and expressed his condolences for civilian victims of the bombing campaign during the Kosovo War. In Kosovo, he attended a ceremony renaming a highway after his son Beau, in honor of Beau's service to Kosovo in training its judges and prosecutors.

Biden never cast a tie-breaking vote in the Senate, making him the longest-serving vice president with this distinction.

Role in the 2016 presidential campaign:

During his second term, Biden was often said to be preparing for a possible bid for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination. With his family, many friends, and donors encouraging him in mid-2015 to enter the race, and with Hillary Clinton's favorability ratings in decline at that time, Biden was reported to again be seriously considering the prospect and a "Draft

Biden 2016" PAC was established. As of September 11, 2015, Biden was still uncertain about running. He cited his son's recent death as a large drain on his emotional energy, and said, "nobody has a right ... to seek that office unless they're willing to give it 110% of who they are." On October 21, speaking from a podium in the Rose Garden with his wife and Obama by his side, Biden announced his decision not to run for president in 2016. In January 2016, Biden affirmed that it was the right decision, but admitted to regretting not running for president "every day".

After Obama endorsed Hillary Clinton on June 9, 2016, Biden endorsed her later that day. Throughout the 2016 election, Biden strongly criticized Clinton's opponent, Donald Trump, in often colorful terms.

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Post Vice Presidency

After leaving the vice presidency, Biden became a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, while continuing to lead efforts to find treatments for cancer. Biden wrote his memoir Promise Me, Dad in 2017 and went on a book tour.[298] Biden earned \$15.6 million in 2017. In 2018, he gave a eulogy for his close friend John McCain, U.S. senator from Arizona, praising McCain's embrace of American ideals and bipartisan friendships.

Biden remained in the public eye, endorsing candidates while continuing to comment on politics, climate change, and the ongoing presidency of Donald Trump. He also continued to speak out in favor of LGBT rights, continuing advocacy on an issue which he had become more closely associated with during his vice presidency. In 2019 Biden criticized Brunei for its intention to implement Islamic laws that would allow death by stoning for adultery and homosexuality, calling it "appalling and immoral" and saying, "There is no excuse—not culture, not tradition—for this kind of hate and inhumanity." By 2019, Biden and his wife reported that their assets had increased to between \$2.2 million and \$8 million, thanks to speaking engagements and a contract to write a set of books.

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2020 presidential campaign:

Speculation and announcement
Between 2016 and 2019, media outlets often mentioned Biden as a likely candidate for president in 2020. When asked if he would run, he gave varied and ambivalent answers, saying "never say never". At one point he suggested he did not see a scenario where he would run

again, but a few days later, he said, "I'll run if I can walk." A political action committee known as Time for Biden was formed in January 2018, seeking Biden's entry into the race.

Biden said he would decide whether to run or not by January 2019, but made no announcement at that time. Friends said he was "very close to saying yes" but was concerned about the effect another presidential run could have on his family and reputation, as well as fundraising struggles and perceptions about his age and relative centrism. On the other hand, he said he was prompted to run by his "sense of duty", offense at the Trump presidency, what he felt was a lack of foreign policy experience among other Democratic hopefuls, and his desire to foster "bridge-building progressivism" in the party. He launched his campaign on April 25, 2019.

Campaign

In September 2019, it was reported that Trump had pressured Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky to investigate alleged wrongdoing by Biden and his son Hunter Biden. Despite the allegations, as of September 2019, no evidence has been produced of any wrongdoing by the Bidens. The media widely interpreted this pressure to investigate the Bidens as trying to hurt Biden's chances of winning the presidency, resulting in a political scandal and Trump's impeachment by the House of Representatives.

Beginning in 2019, Trump and his allies falsely accused Biden of getting the Ukrainian prosecutor general Viktor Shokin fired because he was supposedly pursuing an investigation into Burisma Holdings, which employed Hunter Biden. Biden was accused of withholding \$1 billion in aid from Ukraine in this effort. In 2015, Biden pressured the Ukrainian parliament to remove Shokin because the United States, the European Union and other international organizations considered Shokin corrupt and ineffective, and in particular because Shokin was not assertively investigating Burisma. The withholding of the \$1 billion in aid was part of this official policy.

Throughout 2019, Biden stayed generally ahead of other Democrats in national polls. Despite this, he finished fourth in the Iowa caucuses, and eight days later, fifth in the New Hampshire primary. He performed better in the Nevada caucuses, reaching the 15% required for delegates, but still was behind Bernie Sanders by 21.6 percentage points. Making strong appeals to black voters on the campaign trail and in the South Caro-



Biden at his presidential kickoff rally in Philadelphia, May 2019

lina debate, Biden won the South Carolina primary by more than 28 points. After the withdrawals and subsequent endorsements of candidates Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar, he made large gains in the March 3 Super Tuesday primary elections. Biden won 18 of the next 26 contests, including Alabama, Arkansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, putting him in the lead overall. Elizabeth Warren and Mike Bloomberg soon dropped out, and Biden expanded his lead with victories over Sanders in four states (Idaho, Michigan, Mississippi, and Missouri) on March 10.

When Sanders suspended his campaign on April 8, 2020, Biden became the Democratic Party's presumptive nominee for president. On April 13, Sanders endorsed Biden in a live-streamed discussion from their homes. Former President Barack Obama endorsed Biden the next day. In March 2020, Biden committed to choosing a woman as his running mate. In June, Biden met the 1,991-delegate threshold needed to secure the party's presidential nomination. On August 11, he announced U.S. Senator Kamala Harris of California as his running mate, making her the first African American and South Asian American vice-presidential nominee on a major-party ticket.

On August 18, 2020, Biden was officially nominated at the 2020 Democratic National Convention as the Democratic Party nominee for president in the 2020 election.

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President-elect of the United States:

Biden was elected the 46th president of the United States in November 2020. He defeated the incumbent, Donald Trump, becoming the first candidate to defeat a sitting president since Bill Clinton defeated George H. W. Bush in 1992. He is the second non-incumbent vice president (after Richard Nixon in 1968) to be elected president.[363] He is also expected to become the oldest president, as well as the first president whose home state is

Delaware (although he was born in Pennsylvania), and the second Catholic president after John F. Kennedy. Biden is expected to be inaugurated at noon on January 20, 2021.

Days after the election, Biden created the COVID-19 Advisory Board to replace the previous White House Coronavirus Task Force. He pledged a larger government response to the pandemic than Trump's, including increased testing, a steady supply of personal protective equipment, distributing a vaccine, and funds for schools and hospitals, all under the aegis of a national "supply chain commander" who would coordinate manufacturing and distribution of protective gear and test kits. Testing materials would be distributed by a "Pandemic Testing Board". Biden also pledged to use the Defense Production Act more aggressively than Trump did in order to build up supplies, and also pledged to employ 100,000 contact tracers to track and limit outbreaks.

On November 11, 2020, Biden chose Ron Klain as his White House Chief of Staff. Klain was a Senate aide to Biden in the 1980s, Biden's first chief of staff as vice president, and chief of staff to Vice President Al Gore.

On November 23, 2020, Biden made his first national security nominations and appointments, nominating Antony Blinken for Secretary of State, Alejandro Mayorkas for Secretary of Homeland Security, Avril Haines for Director of National Intelligence, Jake Sullivan for National Security Advisor, Linda Thomas-Greenfield for United States Ambassador to the United Nations, and former Secretary of State John Kerry for Special Presidential Envoy for Climate. If confirmed, Haines would be the first woman to serve as Director of National Intelligence, and Mayorkas would be the first Latin American and first immigrant to serve as head of the United States Department of Homeland Security. He later announced that Janet Yellen was his nominee for Secretary of the Treasury.

Also on November 23, General Services Administrator Emily W. Murphy formally recognized Biden as the apparent winner of the 2020 election and authorized the start of a transition process to the Biden administration.

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Political positions:

Biden has been characterized as a moderate Democrat and a centrist. He has a lifetime liberal 72% score from the Americans

for Democratic Action (ADA) through 2004, while the American Conservative Union (ACU) gave him a lifetime conservative rating of 13% through 2008.

Biden supported the fiscal stimulus in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; the Obama administration's proposed increased infrastructure spending; mass transit, including Amtrak, bus, and subway subsidies; and the reduced military spending in the Obama administration's fiscal year 2014 budget. He has proposed partially reversing the corporate tax cuts of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, saying that doing so would not hurt businesses' ability to hire. He voted for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)[388] and the Trans-Pacific Partnership.[389] Biden is a staunch supporter of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). He has promoted a plan to expand and build upon it, paid for by revenue gained from reversing some Trump administration tax cuts. Biden's plan is to create a public option for health insurance, with the aim of expanding health insurance coverage to 97% of Americans.

Biden has supported reproductive rights; same-sex marriage; the Roe v. Wade decision; and since 2019 has supported repealing the Hyde Amendment. He opposes drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and supports governmental funding to find new energy sources. He believes action must be taken on global warming. He co-sponsored the Sense of the Senate resolution calling on the United States to take part in the United Nations climate negotiations and the Boxer–Sanders Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act, the most stringent climate bill in the United States Senate. He wants to achieve a carbon-free power sector in the U.S. by 2035 and stop emissions completely by 2050. His program includes reentering the Paris Agreement, nature conservation, and green building. Biden wants to pressure China and other countries to cut greenhouse gas emissions, by carbon tariffs if necessary. As a senator, he forged deep relationships with police groups and was a chief proponent of a Police Officer's Bill of Rights measure that police unions supported but police chiefs opposed. As vice president, he served as a White House liaison to police.

Biden has said he is against regime change, but for providing non-military support to opposition

movements. He opposed direct U.S. intervention in Libya; voted against U.S. participation in the Gulf War;[408] voted in favor of the Iraq War; and supports a two-state solution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[410] Biden has pledged to end U.S. support for the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen and to reevaluate the relationship with Saudi Arabia. He has called North Korea a "paper tiger". As vice president, Biden supported Obama's Cuban thaw. He has said that, as president, he would restore U.S. membership in key United Nations bodies, such as UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization, and possibly the Human Rights Council. Biden pledged, if elected, to sanction and commercially restrict Chinese government officials and entities who carry out repression. Biden supports extending the New START arms control treaty with Russia to limit the number of nuclear weapons deployed by both sides.

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Distinctions:

✦ Biden has received honorary degrees from the University of Scranton (1976), Saint Joseph's University (LL.D 1981),[420] Widener University School of Law (2000), Emerson College (2003), Delaware State University (2003), his alma mater the University of Delaware (LL.D 2004), Suffolk University Law School (2005), his other alma mater Syracuse University (LL.D 2009), Wake Forest University (LL.D 2009), the University of Pennsylvania (LL.D 2013), Miami Dade College (2014), University of South Carolina (DPA 2014), Trinity College, Dublin (LL.D 2016), Colby College (LL.D 2017), and Mor-

gan State University DPS 2017).
✦ Biden also received the Chancellor Medal (1980) and the George Arents Pioneer Medal (2005) from Syracuse University.
✦ In 2008, Biden received Working Mother magazine's Best of Congress Award for "improving the American quality of life through family-friendly work policies". Also in 2008, he shared with fellow senator Richard Lugar the Government of Pakistan's Hilal-i-Pakistan award "in recognition of their consistent support for Pakistan". In 2009, Kosovo gave Biden the Golden Medal of Freedom, the region's highest award, for his vocal support for its independence in the late 1990s.
✦ Biden is an inductee of the Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association Hall of Fame.[438] He was named to the Little League Hall of Excellence in 2009.
✦ On May 15, 2016, the University of Notre Dame gave Biden the Laetare Medal, considered the highest honor for American Catholics. The medal was simultaneously awarded to John Boehner, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.
✦ On June 25, 2016, Biden received the Freedom of the City of County Louth in the Republic of Ireland.
✦ On January 12, 2017, Obama surprised Biden by awarding him the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction?—?for "faith in your fellow Americans, for your love of country and a lifetime of service that will endure through the generations". It was the only award by Obama of the Medal of Freedom with Distinction; other recipients include Ronald Reagan, Colin Powell and Pope John Paul II.
✦ On December 11, 2018, the University of Delaware renamed its School of Public Policy and Administration the Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration. The Biden Institute is housed there.
✦ On December 10, 2020, Biden and Harris were jointly named Time Person of the Year.



President Obama presents Biden with the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction, January 12, 2017.



Kamala Harris

The first Black and Indian-American woman to represent California in the United States Senate, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris grew up believing in the promise of America and fighting to make sure that promise is fulfilled for all Americans. Harris' father immigrated to the U.S. from Jamaica to study economics and her mother immigrated from India. Harris' mother told her growing up, "Don't sit around and complain about things, do something," which is what drives Harris every single day. Harris started fighting for working families in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, where she focused on prosecuting child sexual assault cases. From there, she became the first Black woman elected as San Francisco's District Attorney. In this position, she started a program to provide first-time drug offenders second chances with the opportunity to earn a high school degree and find a job. In 2010, Harris became the first Black woman to be elected Attorney General of California, overseeing the country's second largest Justice Department after the U.S. Department of Justice. In this capacity, she managed a \$735 million budget and oversaw more than 4,800 attorneys and other employees. As California Attorney General, Harris fought for families and won a \$20 billion settlement for California homeowners against big banks that were unfairly foreclosing on homes. Harris worked to protect Obamacare, helped win marriage equality for all, defended California's landmark climate change law and won a \$1.1 billion settlement against a



for-profit education company that scammed students and veterans. Harris also fought for California communities and prosecuted transnational gangs who drove human trafficking, gun smuggling, and drug rings. During her time as a U.S. Senator, Harris has introduced and co-sponsored legislation to help the middle class, increase the minimum wage to \$15, reform cash bail, and defend the legal rights of refugees and immigrants. Harris has served on the Senate Judiciary Committee, where she has fought to pro-

tect Americans' civil rights, restore independence and integrity to the Justice Department, and scrutinized nominations coming before the Committee.

On the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Harris has dealt with the nation's most sensitive national security and international threats. She also has served on the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee where she has overseen the federal government's response to natural disasters and emergencies, in-

cluding the Trump administration's response to COVID-19.

Harris graduated from Howard University in Washington, D.C., where she was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., and earned a law degree from the University of California, Hastings College of Law.

Harris has been married to her husband Doug Emhoff for the past six years. She is the stepmother of two children, Cole and Ella, who call her "Momala" and are her "endless source of love and pure joy."



Compiled by Parthiban Shanmugam
General Secretary, World Federation of
Tamil Youth, USA
& Digital Director, BIDEN HARRIS
CAMPAIGN, National Democratic
Committee, Washington D.C.





Kamala Devi Harris born October 20, 1964 who is the vice president-elect of the United States and the junior United States senator from California. Prior to her election to the Senate, she served as the attorney general of California.

A member of the Democratic Party, she will become vice president upon inauguration on January 20, 2021, alongside President-elect Joe Biden, having defeated the incumbent president Donald Trump and vice president Mike Pence in the 2020 election. She will be the United States' first female vice president, the highest-ranking female elected official in U.S. history, and the first African American and first Asian American vice president.

Born in Oakland, California, Harris graduated from Howard University and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. She began her career in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, before being recruited to the San Francisco District Attorney's Office and later the City Attorney of San Francisco's office. In 2003, she was elected district attorney of San Francisco. She was elected Attorney General of California in 2010 and re-elected in 2014. Harris has served as the junior United States senator from California since 2017. Harris defeated Loretta

Sanchez in the 2016 Senate election to become the second African American woman and the first South Asian American to serve in the United States Senate. As a senator, she has advocated healthcare reform, federal de-scheduling of cannabis, a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, the DREAM Act, a ban on assault weapons, and progressive tax reform. She gained a national profile for her pointed questioning of Trump administration officials during Senate hearings, including Trump's second Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, who was accused of sexual assault.

Harris sought the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, but dropped out of the race prior to the primaries.[9] Former vice president Joe Biden selected Harris as his running mate in August 2020, and the Biden-Harris ticket won the November 2020 election. Kamala Harris was born in Oakland, California, on October 20, 1964. Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, a biologist, Tamil immigrant whose work on the progesterone receptor gene stimulated advances in breast cancer research, had arrived in the U.S. from Tamil Nadu in India in 1958 as a 19-year-old graduate student in nutrition and endocrinology at the University of California, Berkeley;

Gopalan received her PhD in 1964. Harris' father, Donald J. Harris, is a Stanford University professor emeritus of economics, who arrived in the U.S. from British Jamaica in 1961 for graduate study at UC Berkeley, receiving a PhD in economics in 1966. Along with her younger sister, Maya, Harris lived in Berkeley, California, briefly on Milvia Street in central Berkeley, then a duplex on Bancroft Way in West Berkeley, an area often called "the flatlands" with a significant black population.

when Harris began kindergarten, she was bused as part of Berkeley's comprehensive desegregation program to Thousand Oaks Elementary School, a public school in a more prosperous neighborhood in northern Berkeley which previously had been 95 percent white, and after the desegregation plan went into effect became 40 percent Black. A neighbor regularly took the Harris girls to an African American church in Oakland where they sang in the children's choir, and the girls and their mother also frequently visited a nearby African American cultural center. Their mother introduced them to Hinduism and took them to a nearby Hindu temple, where she occasionally sang. As children, she and her sister visited their mother's family in Madras (now Chennai) several times. She says she has been strongly influenced by her maternal grandfather P. V. Gopalan, a retired Indian civil servant whose progressive views on democracy and women's rights impressed her. Harris has remained in touch with her Indian aunts and uncles throughout her adult life. Harris has also visited her father's family in Jamaica.

Her parents divorced when she was seven. Harris has said that when she and her sister visited their father in Palo Alto on weekends, other children in the neighborhood were not allowed to play with them because they were black. When she was twelve, Harris and her sister moved with their mother to Montreal, Quebec, Canada, where Shyamala had accepted a research and teaching position at the McGill University-affiliated Jewish General Hospital. Harris attended a French-speaking primary school, Notre-Dame-des-Neiges, then F.A.C.E. School, and then Westmount High School in Westmount, Quebec, graduating in 1981. Wanda Kagan, a high school friend of Harris, later told CBC News in 2020 that Harris was her best friend and described how she confided in Harris that she had been molested by her stepfather. She said that Harris told her mother, who then insisted Kagan come to live with them for the remainder of her final year of high

school. Kagan said Harris had recently told her that their friendship, and playing a role in countering Kagan's exploitation, helped form the commitment Harris felt in protecting women and children as a prosecutor. After high school, in 1982, Harris attended Howard University, a historically black university in Washington, D.C. While at Howard, she interned as a mailroom clerk for California senator Alan Cranston, chaired the economics society, led the debate team, and joined Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. Harris graduated from Howard in 1986 with a degree in political science and economics.

Harris then returned to California to attend law school at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law through its Legal Education Opportunity Program (LEOP). While at UC Hastings, she served as president of its chapter of the Black Law Students Association. She graduated with a Juris Doctor in 1989 and was admitted to the California Bar in June 1990.

In 1990, Harris was hired as a deputy district attorney in Alameda County, California, where she was described as "an able prosecutor on the way up". In 1994, Speaker of the California Assembly Willie Brown, who was then dating Harris, appointed her to the state Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board and later to the California Medical Assistance Commission. Harris took a six-month leave of absence in 1994 from her duties as prosecutor, then afterward resumed as prosecutor during the years she sat on the boards. Harris's connection to Brown was noted in media reportage as part of a pattern of Californian political leaders appointing "friends and loyal political soldiers" to lucrative positions on the commissions. Harris has defended her work.

In February 1998, San Francisco district attorney Terence Hallinan recruited Harris as an assistant district attorney. There, she became the chief of the Career Criminal Division, supervising five other attorneys, where she prosecuted homicide, burglary, robbery, and sexual assault cases – particularly three-strikes cases. In 2000, Harris reportedly clashed with Hallinan's assistant, Darrell Salomon, over Proposition 21, which granted prosecutors the option of trying juvenile defendants in Superior Court rather than juvenile courts. Harris campaigned against the measure, which passed. Salomon opposed directing media inquiries about Prop 21 to Harris and reassigned her, a de facto demotion. Harris filed a complaint against Salomon and quit.

In August 2000, Harris took a new job at San Francisco City Hall,



Harris's childhood home on Bancroft Way in Berkeley



Harris in 2004 with California congresswoman Nancy Pelosi

working for city attorney Louise Renne. Harris ran the Family and Children's Services Division representing child abuse and neglect cases. Renne endorsed Harris during her D.A. campaign.

In 2002, Harris prepared to run for District Attorney of San Francisco against Hallinan (the incumbent) and Bill Fazio. Harris was the least-known of the three candidates but persuaded the Central Committee to withhold its endorsement from Hallinan. Harris and Hallinan advanced to the general election runoff with 33 and 37 percent of the vote, respectively.

In the runoff, Harris pledged never to seek the death penalty and to prosecute three-strike offenders only in cases of violent felonies. Harris ran a "forceful" campaign, assisted by former mayor Willie Brown, Senator Dianne Feinstein, writer and cartoonist Aaron McGruder, and comedians Eddie Griffin and Chris Rock. Harris differentiated herself from Hallinan by attacking his performance. She argued that she left his office because it was technologically inept, emphasizing his 52 percent conviction rate for serious crimes despite an 83 percent average conviction rate statewide. Harris charged that his office was not doing enough to stem the city's gun violence, particularly in poor neighborhoods like Bayview and the Tenderloin, and attacked his willingness to accept plea bargains in cases of domestic violence. Harris won with 56 percent of the vote, becoming the first person of color elected as district attorney of San Francisco.

Harris ran unopposed for a second term in 2007.

Public safety

Non-violent crimes:

In the summer of 2005, Harris created an environmental crimes unit.

In 2007, Harris and city attorney Dennis Herrera investigated San Francisco supervisor Ed Jew for violating residency requirements necessary to hold his supervisor position; Harris charged Jew with nine felonies, alleging that he had lied under oath and falsified documents to make it appear he resided in a Sunset District home, necessary so he could run for supervisor in the 4th district.[65] Jew pleaded guilty in October 2008 to unrelated federal corruption charges (mail fraud, soliciting a bribe, and extortion) and pleaded guilty the following month in state court to a charge of perjury for lying about his address on nomination forms, as part of a plea agreement in which the other state charges were dropped and Jew agreed to never again hold elected office in California. Harris described the case as "about protecting the integrity of our political process, which is part of the core of our democracy". For his federal offenses, Jew was sentenced to 64 months in federal prison and a \$10,000 fine; for the state perjury conviction, Jew was sentenced to one year in county jail, three years' probation, and about \$2,000 in fines.

Under Harris, the D.A.'s office obtained more than 1,900 convictions for marijuana offenses, including persons simultaneously convicted of marijuana offenses and more serious crimes. The rate at which Harris's office prosecuted marijuana crimes was higher than the rate under Hallinan, but the number of defendants sentenced to state prison for

such offenses was substantially lower. Prosecutions for low-level marijuana offenses were rare under Harris, and her office had a policy of not pursuing jail time for marijuana possession offenses.[69] Harris's successor as D.A., George Gascón, expunged all San Francisco marijuana offenses going back to 1975.

Violent crimes

In the early 2000s, the San Francisco murder rate per capita outpaced the national average. Within the first six months of taking office, Harris cleared 27 of 74 backlogged homicide cases by settling 14 by plea bargain and taking 11 to trial; of those trials, nine ended with convictions and two with hung juries. She took 49 violent crime cases to trial and secured 36 convictions. From 2004 to 2006, Harris achieved an 87 percent conviction rate for homicides and a 90 percent conviction rate for all felony gun violations.

Harris also pushed for higher bail for criminal defendants involved in gun-related crimes, arguing that historically low bail encouraged outsiders to commit crimes in San Francisco. SFPD officers credited Harris with tightening the loopholes defendants had used in the past. In addition to creating a gun crime unit, Harris opposed releasing defendants on their own recognizance if they were arrested on gun crimes, sought minimum 90-day sentences for possession of concealed or loaded weapons, and charged all assault weapons possession cases as felonies, adding that she would seek prison terms for criminals who possessed or used assault weapons and would seek maximum penalties on gun-related crimes.

Harris created a Hate Crimes Unit, focusing on hate crimes against LGBT children and teens in schools.[74] In early 2006, Gwen Araujo, a 17-year-old American Latina transgender teenager, was murdered by two men who later used the "gay panic defense" before being convicted of second-degree murder. Harris, alongside Araujo's mother Sylvia Guerrero, convened a two-day conference of at least 200 prosecutors and law enforcement officials nationwide to discuss strategies to counter such legal defenses. Harris subsequently supported A.B. 1160, the Gwen Araujo Justice for Victims Act, advocating that California's penal code include jury instructions to ignore bias, sympathy, prejudice, or public opinion in making their decision, also making mandatory for district attorney's offices in California to educate prosecutors about panic strategies and how to prevent bias from affecting trial outcomes. In September 2006, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed A.B. 1160 into law; the law put California on record as declaring it contrary to public policy for defendants to be acquitted or convicted of a lesser included offense on the basis of appeals to "societal bias".

In August 2007, state assemblyman Mark Leno introduced legislation to ban gun shows at the Cow Palace, joined by Harris, police chief Heather Fong, and mayor Gavin Newsom. City leaders contended the shows were directly contributing to the proliferation of illegal guns and spiking homicide rates in San Francisco (Newsom earlier that month signed into law local legislation banning gun shows on city and county

property). Leno alleged that merchants drove through the public housing developments nearby and illegally sold weapons to residents. While the bill would stall, local opposition to the shows continued until the Cow Palace Board of Directors in 2019 voted to approve a statement banning all future gun shows.

Reform efforts

Death penalty

Harris has said life imprisonment without parole is a better and more cost-effective punishment than the death penalty, and has estimated that the resultant cost savings could pay for a thousand additional police officers in San Francisco alone.

During her campaign, Harris pledged never to seek the death penalty. After a San Francisco Police Department officer, Isaac Espinoza, was shot and killed in 2004, U.S. senator (and former San Francisco mayor) Dianne Feinstein, U.S. senator Barbara Boxer, Oakland mayor Jerry Brown, and the San Francisco Police Officers Association pressured Harris to reverse that position, but she did not. (Polls found that seventy percent of voters supported Harris's decision.)[83] When Edwin Ramos, an illegal immigrant and alleged MS-13 gang member, was accused of murdering a man and his two sons in 2009,[84] Harris sought a sentence of life in prison without parole, a decision Mayor Gavin Newsom backed.

Recidivism and re-entry initiative

In 2004, Harris recruited civil rights activist Lateefah Simon to create the San Francisco Reentry Division. The flagship program was the Back on Track initiative, a first-of-its-kind reentry program for first-time nonviolent offenders aged 18–30. Initiative participants whose crimes were not weapon- or gang-related would plead guilty in exchange for a deferral of sentencing and regular appearances before a judge over a twelve-to eighteen-month period. The program maintained rigorous graduation requirements, mandating completion of up to 220 hours of community service, obtaining a high-school-equivalency diploma, maintaining steady employment, taking parenting classes, and passing drug tests. At graduation, the court would dismiss the case and expunge the graduate's record. Over six years, the 200 people graduated from the program had a recidivism rate of less than ten percent, compared to the 53 percent of California's drug offenders who returned to prison within two years of release. Back on Track earned recognition from the U.S. Department of Justice as a model for reentry programs. The DOJ found that the cost to the taxpayers per participant was markedly lower (\$5,000) than the cost of adjudicating a case (\$10,000) and housing a low-level offender (\$50,000). In 2009, a state law (the Back on Track Reentry Act, A.B. 750) was enacted, encouraging other California counties to start similar programs. Adopted by the National District Attorneys Association as a model, prosecutor offices in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Atlanta have used Back on Track as a template for their own programs.

Truancy initiative

In 2006, as part of an initiative to reduce the city's skyrocketing homicide rate, Harris led a city-wide effort to combat truancy for at-risk elementary school youth in San Francisco. Declaring

chronic truancy a matter of public safety and pointing out that the majority of prison inmates and homicide victims are dropouts or habitual truants, Harris's office met with thousands of parents at high-risk schools and sent out letters warning all families of the legal consequences of truancy at the beginning of the fall semester, adding she would prosecute the parents of chronically truant elementary students; penalties included a \$2,500 fine and up to a year in jail. The program was controversial when introduced.

In 2008, Harris issued citations against six parents whose children missed at least fifty days of school, the first time San Francisco prosecuted adults for student truancy. San Francisco's school chief, Carlos Garcia, said the path from truancy to prosecution was lengthy, and that the school district usually spends months encouraging parents through phone calls, reminder letters, private meetings, hearings before the School Attendance Review Board, and offers of help from city agencies and social services; two of the six parents entered no plea but said they would work with the D.A.'s office and social service agencies to create "parental responsibility plans" to help them start sending their children to school regularly. By April 2009, 1,330 elementary school students were habitual or chronic truants, down 23 percent from 1,730 in 2008, and down from 2,517 in 2007 and from 2,856 in 2006. Harris's office prosecuted seven parents in three years, with none jailed.

Elections - 2010

Nearly two years before the 2010 election, Harris announced she planned to run. She also stated she would only run if then-Attorney General Jerry Brown did not seek re-election for that position. Brown instead chose to run for governor and Harris consolidated support from prominent California Democrats. Both of California's senators, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, United Farm Workers cofounder Dolores Huerta, and mayor of Los Angeles Antonio Villaraigosa all endorsed her during the Democratic primary. In the June 8, 2010 primary, she was nominated with 33.6 percent of the vote, defeating Alberto Torrico and Chris Kelly.

In the general election, she faced Republican Los Angeles County district attorney Steve Cooley, who led most of the race. Cooley ran as a nonpartisan, distancing himself from Republican gubernatorial candidate Meg Whitman's campaign.[citation needed] The election was held November 2 but after a protracted period of counting mail-in and provisional ballots, Cooley conceded on November 25. Harris was sworn in on January 3, 2011; she is the first woman, the first African American, and the first South Asian American to hold the office of Attorney General in the state's history.

Attorney General election - 2014

Harris announced her intention to run for re-election in February 2014 and filed paperwork to run on February 12. The Sacramento Bee, Los Angeles Daily News, and Los Angeles Times endorsed her for re-election.

On November 4, 2014, Harris was re-elected against Republican Ronald Gold, winning 57.5 percent of the vote

to 42.5 percent.

Consumer protection - Fraud, waste, and abuse

In 2011, Harris announced the creation of the Mortgage Fraud Strike Force in the wake of the 2010 United States foreclosure crisis. That same year, Harris obtained two of the largest recoveries in the history of California's False Claims Act – \$241 million from Quest Diagnostics and then \$323 million from the SCAN healthcare network – over excess state Medi-Cal and federal Medicare payments.

In 2012, Harris leveraged California's economic clout to obtain better terms in the National Mortgage Settlement against the nation's five largest mortgage servicers – JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Citigroup and Ally Bank.[115] The mortgage firms were accused of illegally foreclosing on homeowners. After dismissing an initial offer of \$2–4 billion in relief for Californians, Harris withdrew from negotiations. The offer eventually was increased to \$18.4 billion in debt relief and \$2 billion in other financial assistance for California homeowners.

Harris worked with Assembly speaker John Pérez and Senate president pro tem Darrell Steinberg in 2013 to introduce the Homeowner Bill of Rights, considered one of the strongest protections nationwide against aggressive foreclosure tactics. The Homeowner Bill of Rights banned the practices of "dual-tracking" (processing a modification and foreclosure at the same time) and robo-signing and provided homeowners with a single point of contact at their lending institution. Harris achieved multiple nine-figure settlements for California homeowners under the bill mostly for robo-signing and dual-track abuses, as well as prosecuting instances in which loan processors failed to promptly credit mortgage payments, miscalculated interest rates, and charged borrowers improper fees. Harris secured hundreds of millions in relief, including \$268 million from Ocwen Financial Corporation, \$470 million from HSBC, and \$550 million from SunTrust Banks.

From 2013 to 2015, Harris pursued financial recoveries for California's public employee and teacher's pensions, CalPERS and CalSTRS against various financial giants for misrepresentation in the sale of mortgage-backed securities. She secured multiple nine-figure recoveries for the state pensions, recovering about \$193 million from Citigroup, \$210 million from S&P, \$300 million from JP Morgan Chase, and over half a billion from Bank of America.

In 2013, Harris declined to authorize a civil complaint drafted by state investigators who accused OneWest Bank, owned by an investment group headed by future U.S. treasury secretary Steven Mnuchin (then a private citizen), of "widespread violation" of California foreclosure laws. During the 2016 elections, Harris was the only Democratic Senate candidate to receive a donation from Mnuchin. Harris was criticized for accepting the donation because Mnuchin purportedly profited from the subprime mortgage crisis through OneWest Bank; she later voted against his confirmation as treasury secretary in February 2017. In 2019, Harris's campaign stated that the decision not to

pursue prosecution hinged on the state's inability to subpoena OneWest. Her spokesman said, "There was no question OneWest conducted predatory lending, and Senator Harris believes they should be punished. Unfortunately, the law was squarely on their side and they were shielded from state subpoenas because they're a federal bank."

In 2014, Harris settled charges she had brought against rent-to-own retailer Aaron's, Inc. on allegations of incorrect late charges, overcharging customers who paid off their contracts before the due date, and privacy violations. In the settlement, the retailer refunded \$28.4 million to California customers and paid \$3.4 million in civil penalties.

In 2015, Harris obtained a \$1.2 billion judgment against for-profit post-secondary education company Corinthian Colleges for false advertising and deceptive marketing targeting vulnerable, low-income students and misrepresenting job placement rates to students, investors, and accreditation agencies.[131] The Court ordered Corinthian to pay \$820 million in restitution and another \$350 million in civil penalties. That same year, Harris also secured a \$60 million settlement with JP Morgan Chase to resolve allegations of illegal debt collection with respect to credit card customers, with the bank also agreeing to change practices that violated California consumer protection laws by collecting incorrect amounts, selling bad credit card debt, and running a debt-collection mill that "robo-signed" court documents without first reviewing the files as it rushed to obtain judgments and wage garnishments. As part of the settlement, the bank was required to stop attempting to collect on more than 528,000 customer accounts. I

In 2015, Harris opened an investigation of the Office of Ratepayer Advocates, San Diego Gas and Electric, and Southern California Edison regarding the closure of San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station. California state investigators searched the home of California utility regulator Michael Peevey and found handwritten notes that allegedly showed he had met with an Edison executive in Poland, where the two had negotiated the terms of the San Onofre settlement, leaving San Diego taxpayers with a \$3.3 billion bill to pay for the closure of the plant. The investigation was closed amidst Harris's 2016 run for the U.S. Senate position.

Privacy rights

In February 2012, Harris announced an agreement with Apple, Amazon, Google, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, and Research in Motion to mandate that apps sold in their stores display prominent privacy policies informing users of what private information they were sharing, and with whom.[136] Facebook later joined the agreement. That summer, Harris announced the creation of a Privacy Enforcement and Protection Unit to enforce laws related to cyber privacy, identity theft, and data breaches. Later the same year, Harris notified a hundred mobile-app developers of their non-compliance with state privacy laws and asked them to create privacy policies or face a \$2500 fine each time a non-compliant app is downloaded by a resident of California.

In 2015, Harris secured two



Harris meets foreclosure victims in 2011.

settlements with Comcast, one totaling \$33 million over allegations that it posted online the names, phone numbers and addresses of tens of thousands of customers who had paid for unlisted voice over internet protocol (VOIP) phone service and another \$26 million settlement to resolve allegations that it discarded paper records without first omitting or redacting private customer information. Harris also settled with Houzz over allegations that the company recorded phone calls without notifying customers or employees. Houzz was forced to pay \$175,000, destroy the recorded calls, and hire a chief privacy officer, the first time such a provision has been included in a settlement with the California Department of Justice.

Criminal justice reform

Launch of Division of Recidivism Reduction and Re-Entry

In November 2013, Harris launched the California Department of Justice's Division of Recidivism Reduction and Re-Entry in partnership with district attorney offices in San Diego, Los Angeles, and Alameda County. In March 2015, Harris announced the creation of a pilot program in coordination with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department called "Back on Track LA". Like Back on Track, first time, non-violent, non-sexual, offenders aged between 18 and 30[failed verification] - 90 men participated in the pilot program for 24–30 months. Assigned a case manager, participants received education through a partnership with the Los Angeles Community College District and job training services.

Sentencing and prison inmate retention

After the 2011 United States Supreme Court in *Brown v. Plata* declared California's prisons so overcrowded they inflicted cruel and unusual punishment, Harris fought federal court supervision, explaining "I have a client, and I don't get to choose my client." Harris's record on wrongful conviction cases as attorney general has engendered some criticism from academics and activists. Law professor Lara Bazelon contends Harris "weaponized technicalities to keep wrongfully convicted people behind bars rather than allow them new trials". Harris declined to take any position on criminal sentencing-reform initiatives Prop 36 (2012) and Prop 47 (2014), arguing it would be improper because her office prepares the ballot booklets. John Van de Kamp, a predecessor as attor-

ney general, publicly disagreed with the rationale.

In September 2014, attorneys for Harris argued unsuccessfully in a court filing against the early release of prisoners, citing the need for inmate firefighting labor. When the memo provoked headlines, Harris spoke out against the memo. She said she was unaware of it, and the attorneys had produced the memo without her knowledge. Since the 1940s, qualified California inmates have the option of volunteering to receive comprehensive training from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in exchange for sentence reductions and more comfortable prison accommodations; prison firefighters receive about \$2 a day, and another \$1 when battling fires.

LGBT rights

Opposing Prop 8

Hollingsworth v. Perry

In 2008, California voters passed Prop 8, a state constitutional amendment providing that only marriages "between a man and a woman" are valid. Legal challenges were made by opponents soon after its approval, and a pair of same-sex couples filed a lawsuit against the initiative in federal court in the case of *Perry v. Schwarzenegger* (later *Hollingsworth v. Perry*). In their 2010 campaigns, California attorney general Jerry Brown and Harris both pledged to not defend Prop 8.

After being elected, Harris declared her office would not defend the marriage ban, leaving the task to Prop 8's proponents. In February 2013, Harris filed an amicus curiae brief, arguing Prop 8 was unconstitutional and that the initiative's sponsors did not have legal standing to represent California's interests by defending the law in federal court. In June 2013, the Supreme Court ruled, 5–4, that Prop 8's proponents lacked standing to defend it in federal court. The next day Harris delivered a speech in downtown Los Angeles urging the Ninth Circuit to lift the stay banning same-sex marriages as soon as possible. The stay was lifted two days later.

Gay and trans panic defense ban

In 2014, Attorney General Kamala Harris co-sponsored legislation to ban the gay and trans panic defense in court, which passed and California became the first state with such legislation.

In February 2014, Michelle-Lael Norsworthy, a transgender inmate at California's Mule Creek State Prison, filed a federal lawsuit based on the Cali-

fornia Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's failure to provide her with what she argued was medically necessary sex reassignment surgery (SRS). In April 2015, a federal judge ordered the state to provide Norsworthy with SRS, finding that prison officials had been "deliberately indifferent to her serious medical need". Harris, representing CDCR, appealed the order to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, arguing that psychotherapy, as well as the hormone therapy Norsworthy had been receiving for her gender dysphoria over the preceding fourteen years, were sufficient medical treatment, and there was "no evidence that Norsworthy is in serious, immediate physical or emotional danger". While Harris defended the state's position in court, she said she ultimately pushed the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to change their policy. In August 2015, while the state's appeal was pending, Norsworthy was released on parole, obviating the state's duty to provide her with inmate medical care and rendering the case moot. In 2019, Harris stated that she took "full responsibility" for briefs her office filed in Norsworthy's case and others involving access to gender-affirming surgery for trans inmates.

Public safety

Anti-truancy efforts

In 2011, Harris urged criminal penalties for parents of truant children as she did as District Attorney of San Francisco, allowing the court to defer judgment if the parent agreed to a mediation period to get their child back in school. Critics charged that local prosecutors implementing her directives were overzealous in their enforcement and Harris's policy adversely affected some families. In 2013, Harris issued a report titled "In School + On Track", which found that more than 250,000 elementary school students in the state were "chronically absent" and the statewide truancy rate for elementary students in the 2012–2013 school year was nearly thirty percent, at a cost of nearly \$1.4 billion to school districts, since funding is based on attendance rates.

Environmental protection

Harris prioritized environmental protection as attorney general, first securing a \$44 million settlement to resolve all damages and costs associated with the Cosco Busan oil spill, in which a container ship collided with San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge and spilled 50,000 gallons of bunker fuel into the San Francisco Bay. In the aftermath of the 2015 Refugio oil spill, which deposited about 140,000 gallons of crude oil off the coast of Santa Barbara, California, Harris

toured the coastline and directed her office's resources and attorneys to investigate possible criminal violations. Thereafter, operator Plains All American Pipeline was indicted on 46 criminal charges related to the spill, with one employee indicted on three criminal charges. In 2019, a Santa Barbara jury returned a verdict finding Plains guilty of failing to properly maintain its pipeline and another eight misdemeanor charges; they were sentenced to pay over \$3 million in fines and assessments.

From 2015 to 2016, Harris secured multiple multi-million-dollar settlements with fuel service companies Chevron, BP, ARCO, Phillips 66, and ConocoPhillips to resolve allegations they failed to properly monitor the hazardous materials in its underground storage tanks used to store gasoline for retail sale at hundreds of California gas stations. In summer 2016, automaker Volkswagen AG agreed to pay up to \$14.7 billion to settle a raft of claims related to so-called defeat devices used to cheat emissions standards on its diesel cars while actually emitting up to forty times the levels of harmful nitrogen oxides allowed under state and federal law. Harris and the chair of the California Air Resources Board, Mary D. Nichols, announced that California would receive \$1.18 billion as well as another \$86 million paid to the state of California in civil penalties.

Law enforcement

California's Prop 69 (2004) required law enforcement to collect DNA samples from any adult arrested for a felony and from individuals arrested for certain crimes. In 2012, Harris announced that the California Department of Justice had improved its DNA testing capabilities such that samples stored at the state's crime labs could now be analyzed four times faster, within thirty days. Accordingly, Harris reported that the Rapid DNA Service Team within the Bureau of Forensic Services had cleared California's DNA backlog for the first time). Harris's office was later awarded a \$1.6 million grant from the Manhattan District Attorney's initiative to eliminate the backlogs of untested rape kits.

In 2015, Harris conducted a 90-day review of implicit bias in policing and police use of deadly force. In April 2015, Harris introduced the first of its kind "Principled Policing: Procedural Justice and Implicit Bias" training, designed in conjunction with Stanford University psychologist and professor Jennifer Eberhardt, to help law enforcement officers overcome barriers to neutral policing and rebuild trust between law enforcement and the community. All Com-

mand-level staff received the training. The training was part of a package of reforms introduced within the California Department of Justice, which also included additional resources deployed to increase the recruitment and hiring of diverse special agents, an expanded role for the department to investigate officer-related shooting investigations and community policing. The same year, Harris's California Department of Justice became the first statewide agency in the country to require all its police officers to wear body cameras. Harris also announced a new state law requiring every law enforcement agency in California to collect, report, and publish expanded statistics on how many people are shot, seriously injured or killed by peace officers throughout the state.

Later that year, Harris appealed a judge's order to take over the prosecution of a high-profile mass murder case and to eject all 250 prosecutors from the Orange County district attorney's office over allegations of misconduct by Republican D.A. Tony Rackauckas. Rackauckas was alleged to have illegally employed jailhouse informants and concealed evidence. Harris noted that it was unnecessary to ban all 250 prosecutors from working on the case, as only a few had been directly involved, later promising a narrower criminal investigation. The U.S. Department of Justice began an investigation into Rackauckas in December 2016, but he was not re-elected.

In 2016, Harris announced a patterns and practices investigation into purported civil rights violations and use of excessive force by the two largest law enforcement agencies in Kern County, California, the Bakersfield Police Department and the Kern County Sheriff's Department. Labeled the "deadliest police departments in America" in a five-part Guardian expose, a separate investigation commissioned by the ACLU and submitted to the California Department of Justice corroborated reports of police using excessive force.

Planned Parenthood

In 2016, Harris's office seized videos and other information from the apartment of an antiabortion activist who had made secret recordings and then accused Planned Parenthood doctors of illegally selling fetal tissue. Harris had announced that her office would investigate the activist in the summer of 2015. She was facing increasing criticism for not taking public action by the time Planned Parenthood filed a lawsuit against the activist.

Sex crimes

In 2011, Harris obtained a guilty plea and a four-year prison sentence from a stalker who used Facebook and social engineering techniques to illegally access the private photographs of women whose social media accounts he hijacked. Harris commented that the Internet had "opened up a new frontier for crime". Later that year, Harris created the eCrime Unit within the California Department of Justice, a 20-attorney unit specifically targeting technology crimes. In 2015, several purveyors of so-called revenge porn sites based in California were arrested, charged with felonies, and sentenced to lengthy prison terms. In the first prosecution of its kind in the United States, Kevin Bollaert was convicted on 21 counts of



AG Harris announces the arrest of 101 gang members in Los Banos, California.

identity theft and six counts of extortion and sentenced to 18 years in prison. Harris brought up these cases when California Congresswoman Katie Hill was targeted for similar cyber exploitation by her ex-husband and forced to resign in late 2019.

In 2016, Harris announced the arrest of Backpage CEO Carl Ferrer on felony charges of pimping a minor, pimping, and conspiracy to commit pimping. The warrant alleged that 99 percent of Backpage's revenue was directly attributable to prostitution-related ads, many of which involved victims of sex trafficking, including children under the age of 18. The pimping charge against Ferrer was dismissed by the California courts in 2016 on the grounds of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, but in 2018, Ferrer pleaded guilty in California to money laundering and agreed to give evidence against the former co-owners of Backpage. Ferrer simultaneously pleaded guilty to charges of money laundering and conspiracy to facilitate prostitution in Texas state court and Arizona federal court. Under pressure, Backpage announced that it was removing its adult section from all its U.S. sites. Harris welcomed the move, saying, "I look forward to them shutting down completely." The investigations continued after she became a senator, and, in April 2018, Backpage and affiliated sites were seized by federal law enforcement.

Transnational criminal organizations

During her term as attorney general, Harris's office oversaw major investigations and prosecutions targeting transnational criminal organizations for their involvement in violent crime, fraud schemes, drug trafficking, and smuggling. Significant arrests and seizures (of weapons, drugs, cash, and other assets) under Harris targeted the Tijuana Cartel (2011), the Nuestra Familia, Norteños, and the Vagos Motorcycle Club (2011), the Norteños (2015), the Crips (2015), the Mexican Mafia (2016), and businesses in the Los Angeles Fashion District accused of operating a major money-laundering hub for Mexican narcotics traffickers (2014).

In summer 2012, Harris signed an accord with the attorney general of Mexico, Marisela Morales, to improve coordination of law enforcement resources targeting transnational gangs engaging in the sale and trafficking of human beings across the San Ysidro border crossing. The accord called for closer integration on investigations between offices and sharing best practices.[206] In 2012, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law two bills advanced by Harris to combat human trafficking. In November, Harris presented a report titled "The State of Human Trafficking in California 2012" at a symposium attended by U.S. secretary of labor Hilda Solis and Attorney General



Harris and LAPD chief Charlie Beck celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964



Harris was sworn into the Senate by then-Vice President Biden on January 3, 2017

Morales, outlining the growing prevalence of human trafficking in the state, and highlighting the involvement of transnational gangs in the practice. In early 2014, Harris issued a report titled, "Gangs Beyond Borders: California and the Fight Against Transnational Crime", addressing the prominent role of drug, weapons, and human trafficking, money laundering, and technology crimes employed by various drug cartels from Mexico, Armenian Power, 18th Street Gang, and MS-13 and offering recommendations for state and local law enforcement to combat the criminal activity. Later that year, Harris led a bipartisan delegation of state attorneys general to Mexico City to discuss transnational crime with Mexican prosecutors. Harris then convened a summit focused on the use of technology to fight transnational organized crime with state and federal officials from the U.S., Mexico, and El Salvador.

U.S. Senate (2017–2020)

Election:

After more than 20 years as a U.S. Senator from California, Senator Barbara Boxer announced in January 2015 that she would not run for reelection in 2016. Harris announced her candidacy for the Senate seat the following week. Harris was a top contender from the beginning of her campaign.

The 2016 California Senate election used California's new top-two primary format where the top two candidates in the primary would advance to the general election regardless of party. In February 2016, Harris won 78% of the California Democratic Party vote at the party convention, allowing Harris's campaign to receive financial support from the party. Three months later, Governor Jerry Brown endorsed her. In the June 7 primary, Harris came in first with 40% of the vote and won with pluralities in most counties. Harris faced congresswoman and fellow Democrat Loretta Sanchez in the general election. It was the first time a Republican did not appear in a general election for the Senate since California began directly electing senators in 1914.

On July 19, President Barack Obama

and Vice President Joe Biden endorsed Harris. In the November 2016 election, Harris defeated Sanchez, capturing over 60% of the vote, carrying all but four counties. Following her victory, she promised to protect immigrants from the policies of President-elect Donald Trump and announced her intention to remain Attorney General through the end of 2016.

Tenure and political positions 2017

On January 28, after Trump signed Executive Order 13769, barring citizens from several Muslim-majority countries from entering the U.S. for ninety days, she condemned the order and was one of many to describe it as a "Muslim ban". She called White House chief of staff John F. Kelly at home to gather information and push back against the executive order.

In February, Harris spoke in opposition to Trump's cabinet picks Betsy DeVos, for Secretary of Education, and Jeff Sessions, for United States attorney general. In early March, she called on Sessions to resign, after it was reported that Sessions spoke twice with Russian ambassador to the United States Sergey Kislyak.

In April, Harris voted against the confirmation of Neil Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court. Later that month, Harris took her first foreign trip to the Middle East, visiting California troops stationed in Iraq and the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, the largest camp for Syrian refugees.

In June, Harris garnered media attention for her questioning of Rod Rosenstein, the deputy attorney general, over the role he played in the May 2017 firing of James Comey, the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecutorial nature of her questioning caused Senator John McCain, an ex officio member of the Intelligence Committee, and Senator Richard Burr, the committee chairman, to interrupt her and request that she be more respectful of the witness. A week later, she questioned Jeff Sessions, the attorney general, on the same topic. Sessions said her questioning "makes me nervous". Burr's singling out of Harris sparked suggestions in the news media that his behavior was sexist, with commentators arguing that Burr would not treat a male Senate colleague in a similar manner.

In December, Harris called for the resignation of Senator Al Franken, asserting on Twitter, "Sexual harassment and misconduct should not be allowed by anyone and should not occur anywhere."

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2018

In January, Harris was appointed to the Senate Judiciary Committee after the resignation of Al Franken. Later that month, Harris questioned Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen for favoring Norwegian immigrants over others and claiming to be unaware that Norway is a predominantly white country.

In May, Harris heatedly questioned Secretary Nielsen about the Trump administration family separation policy, under which children were separated from their families when the parents were taken into custody for illegally entering the U.S. In June, after visiting one of the detention facilities near the border in San Diego, Harris became the first senator to demand Nielsen's resignation.

In the September and October Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court confirmation



Kamala Harris at SF Pride Parade 2019

hearings, Harris questioned Brett Kavanaugh about a meeting he may have had regarding the Mueller Investigation with a member of Kasowitz Benson Torres, the law firm founded by the President's personal attorney Marc Kasowitz. Kavanaugh was unable to answer and repeatedly deflected. Harris also participated in questioning the FBI director's limited scope of the investigation on Kavanaugh regarding allegations of sexual assault. She voted against his confirmation.

Harris was a target of the October 2018 United States mail bombing attempts. In December, the Senate passed the Justice for Victims of Lynching Act (S. 3178), sponsored by Harris.

2019

In March 2019, after Special Counsel Robert Mueller submitted his report on Russian interference in the 2016 election, Harris called for U.S. Attorney General William Barr to testify before Congress in the interests of transparency. Two days later, Barr released a four-page "summary" of the redacted Mueller Report, which was criticized as a deliberate mischaracterization of its conclusions. Later that month, Harris was one of twelve Democratic senators to sign a letter led by Mazie Hirono questioning Barr's decision to offer "his own conclusion that the President's conduct did not amount to obstruction of justice" and called for an investigation into whether Barr's summary of the Mueller Report and his statements at a news conference were misleading.

On May 1, 2019, Barr testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee. During the hearing, Barr remained defiant about the misrepresentations in the four-page summary he had released ahead of the full report. When asked by Harris if he had reviewed the underlying evidence before deciding not to charge the President with obstruction of justice,



Harris (center) at the 2018 commemorations of Bloody Sunday in Selma, where she was invited to speak by John Lewis (right).



Kamala Harris formally announced her run for the Democratic nomination for president on January 27, 2019.

BIDEN HARRIS

Barr admitted that neither he, Rod Rosenstein, nor anyone in his office reviewed the evidence supporting the report before making the charging decision. Harris later called for Barr to resign, and accused him of refusing to answer her questions because he could open himself up to perjury, and stating his responses disqualified him from serving as U.S. attorney general. Two days later, Harris demanded again that the Department of Justice inspector general Michael E. Horowitz investigate whether Attorney General Barr acceded to pressure from the White House to investigate Trump's political enemies.

In November 2019, Harris called for an investigation into the death of Roxsana Hernández, a transgender woman and immigrant who died in ICE custody.

In December, Harris led a group of Democratic senators and civil rights organizations in demanding the removal of White House senior adviser Stephen Miller after emails published by the Southern Poverty Law Center revealed frequent promotion of white nationalist literature to Breitbart website editors.

2020

Before the opening of the impeachment trial of Donald Trump on January 16, 2020, Harris delivered remarks on the floor of the Senate, stating her views on the integrity of the American justice system and the principle that nobody, including an incumbent president, is above the law. Harris later asked Senate Judiciary chairman Lindsey Graham to halt all judicial nominations during the impeachment trial, to which Graham acquiesced. Harris voted to convict the president on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Harris has worked on bipartisan bills with Republican co-sponsors, including a bail reform bill with Senator Rand Paul,[264] an election security bill with Senator James Lankford,[265] and a workplace harassment bill with Senator Lisa Murkowski.

2021

Upon her election as Vice President of the United States, Harris is expected to resign from her seat prior to taking office on January 20, 2021, and be replaced by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla.

Committee assignments

Harris is a member of the following committees:

- Committee on the Budget
- Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
- Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management
- Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management
- Select Committee on Intelligence
- Committee on the Judiciary
- Subcommittee on the Constitution
- Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts
- Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and the Law
- Caucus memberships

•Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

•Congressional Black Caucus

•Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues

2020 presidential election

Presidential campaign

Harris had been considered a top contender and potential frontrunner for the 2020 Democratic nomination for president. In June 2018, she was quoted as "not ruling it out". In July 2018, it was announced that she would publish a memoir, a sign of a possible run.[274] On January 21, 2019, Harris officially announced her candidacy for president of the United States in the 2020 United States presidential election. In the first 24 hours after her candidacy announcement, she tied a record set by Bernie Sanders in 2016 for the most donations raised in the day following an announcement.[citation needed] More than 20,000 people attended her formal campaign launch event in her hometown of Oakland, California, on January 27, according to a police estimate.

During the first Democratic presidential debate in June 2019, Harris scolded former vice president Joe Biden for "hurtful" remarks he made, speaking fondly of senators who opposed integration efforts in the 1970s and working with them to oppose mandatory school busing. Harris's support rose by between six and nine points in polls following that debate. In the second debate in August, Harris was confronted by Biden and Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard over her record as Attorney General. The San Jose Mercury News assessed that some of Gabbard's and Biden's accusations were on point, such as blocking the DNA testing of a death row inmate, while others did not stand up to scrutiny. In the immediate aftermath, Harris fell in the polls following that debate. Over the next few months her poll numbers fell to the low single digits. At a time when liberals were increasingly concerned about the excesses of the criminal justice system, Harris faced criticism from reformers for tough-on-crime policies she pursued while she was California's attorney general. For example, in 2014, she decided to defend California's death penalty in court.

Prior to and during her presidential campaign an online informal organization using the hashtag #KHive formed to support her candidacy and defend her from racist and sexist attacks. According to the Daily Dot, Joy Reid first used the term in an August 2017 tweet saying "@DrJasonJohnson @ZerlinaMaxwell and I had a meeting and decided it's called the K-Hive."

On December 3, 2019, Harris withdrew from seeking the 2020 Democratic nomination, citing a shortage of funds. In March 2020, Harris endorsed Joe Biden for president.

Vice presidential campaign

In May 2019, senior members of the Con-



Kamala Harris at Howard University in 2017

gressional Black Caucus endorsed the idea of a Biden–Harris ticket. In late February, Biden won a landslide victory in the 2020 South Carolina Democratic primary with the endorsement of House whip Jim Clyburn, with more victories on Super Tuesday. In early March, Clyburn suggested Biden choose a black woman as a running mate, commenting that "African American women needed to be rewarded for their loyalty". In March, Biden committed to choosing a woman for his running mate.

On April 17, 2020, Harris responded to media speculation and said she "would be honored" to be Biden's running mate. In late May, in relation to the death of George Floyd and ensuing protests and demonstrations, Biden faced renewed calls to select a black woman to be his running mate, highlighting the law enforcement credentials of Harris and Val Demings.

On June 12, The New York Times reported that Harris was emerging as the frontrunner to be Biden's running mate, as she is the only African American woman with the political experience typical of vice presidents. On June 26, CNN reported that more than a dozen people close to the Biden search process considered Harris one of Biden's top four contenders, along with Elizabeth Warren, Val Demings, and Keisha Lance Bottoms.

On August 11, 2020, Biden announced that he had chosen Harris. She was the first African American, the first Indian American, and the third woman after Geraldine Ferraro and Sarah Palin to be picked as the vice-presidential nominee for a major party ticket.

Harris became the vice president-elect following the Biden–Harris ticket's victory in the 2020 United States presidential election.[299] After the major networks called the election for Biden/Harris, Kamala Harris was recorded calling Biden, saying, "We did it! We did it, Joe. You're going to be the next President of the United States." The quote became one of the top 10 tweets of 2020.

Vice President–elect

Following the election of Joe Biden as U.S. president in the 2020 election, Harris will assume office as vice president of the United States on January 20, 2021. She will be the first female vice president, as well as the first person of color to hold the post since Charles Curtis, a Native American, who served under Herbert Hoover from 1929 to 1933. She will also be the third

person with acknowledged non-European ancestry to reach one of the highest offices in the executive branch, after Curtis and former President Barack Obama.

Campaign logo for the Biden–Harris ticket

Awards and honors

In 2005, the National Black Prosecutors Association awarded Harris the Thurgood Marshall Award. That year, she was featured along with 19 other women in a Newsweek report profiling "20 of America's Most Powerful Women". A 2008 New York Times article published later that year also identified her as a woman with potential to become president of the United States, highlighting her reputation as a "tough fighter".

In 2013, Time named Harris as one of the "100 Most Influential People in the World". In 2016, the 20/20 Bipartisan Justice Center awarded Harris the Bipartisan Justice Award along with Senator Tim Scott. Biden and Harris were jointly named Time Person of the Year for 2020.

Honorary degrees

Gave commencement address

California	May 15, 2015	University of Southern California	Doctor of Laws (LL.D.)
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District of Columbia	May 13, 2017	Howard University	Doctor of Humane Letters (DHL)
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Personal life of Kamala Devi Harris

Kamala married attorney Doug Emhoff, who was at one time partner-in-charge at Venable LLP's Los Angeles office, on August 22, 2014, in Santa Barbara, California. Harris is a stepmother to Emhoff's two children from his previous marriage to the film producer Kerstin Emhoff. As of August 2019, Harris and her husband had an estimated net worth of \$5.8 million.

In 2001, she briefly dated Montel Williams, the former host of The Montel Williams Show.

Harris is a multiracial American and a Baptist, holding membership of the Third Baptist Church of San Francisco, a congregation of the American Baptist Churches USA.

Her sister, Maya, is a lawyer and MSNBC political analyst; her brother-in-law, Tony West, is general counsel of Uber and a former United States Department of Justice senior official. Her niece, Meena, is the founder of the Phenomenal Women Action Campaign and former head of strategy and leadership at Uber.

US President-elect Biden ropes in 20 Indian-Americans in his administration, 17 at key WH positions

Three Indian-Americans have made their way to the crucial National Security Council of the White House, thus leaving a permanent imprint on the country's foreign policy and national security.

WASHINGTON: Less than 100 hours ahead of his historic inauguration, US President-elect Joe Biden has either nominated or named at least 20 Indian Americans, including 13 women, to key positions in his administration, a new record in itself for this small ethnic community that constitutes one per cent of the country's population. As many as 17 of them would be part of the powerful White House complex. The January 20th inauguration, the 59th in all, wherein Biden would be sworn in as the 46th President of the United States is already historic in the making as for the first time ever a woman Kamala Harris would be sworn as the vice president of the country. Harris, 56, is also the first-ever Indian-origin and African American to be sworn in as the vice president of the United States. It is also for the first time ever that so many Indian-Americans have been roped into a presidential administration ever before the inauguration.

Biden is still quite far away from filling all the positions in his administration. Topping the list is Neera Tanden, who has been nominated as Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget and Dr Vivek Murthy, who has been nominated as the US Surgeon General. Vanita Gupta has been nominated as Associate Attorney General Department of Justice, and on Saturday, Biden nominated a former foreign service official Uzra Zeya as the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. "The dedication that the Indian-American community has shown to public service

over the years has been recognised in a big way at the very start of this administration! I am particularly pleased that the overwhelming majority are women. Our community has truly arrived in serving the nation," Indiaspora founder M R Rangaswami told PTI.

Mala Adiga has been appointed as Policy Director to the future First Lady Dr Jill Biden and Garima Verma would be the Digital Director of the Office of the First Lady, while Sabrina Singh has been named as her Deputy Press Secretary. For the first time ever among the Indian-Americans include two who trace their roots to Kashmir: Aisha Shah, who has been named as Partnership Manager at the White House Office of Digital Strategy, and Sameera Fazili, who would occupy the key position of Deputy Director at the US National Economic Council (NEC) in the White House. White House National Economic Council also has another Indian American, Bharat Ramamurti, as Deputy Director. Gautam Raghavan, who served at the White House in the previous Obama Administration returns to the White House as Deputy Director in Office of Presidential Personnel.

Among Biden's inner circle is his top confidant for year Vinay Reddy, who has been named as Director Speechwriting. Young Vedant Patel all set to occupy a seat in the White House lower press, behind the briefing room, as Assistant Press Secretary to the President. He is only the third-ever Indian American to be part of the White House press shop. Three Indian-Americans have made their way to the crucial National



Security Council of the White House, thus leaving a permanent imprint on the country's foreign policy and national security. They are Tarun Chhabra: Senior Director for Technology and National Security, Sumona Guha, Senior Director for South Asia, Shanthi Kalathil: Coordinator for Democracy and Human Rights. Sonia Aggarwal has been named Senior Advisor for Climate Policy and Innovation in the Office of the Domestic Climate Policy at the White House and Vidur Sharma has been appointed as Policy Advisor for Testing for the White House COVID-19 Response Team.

Two Indian Americans women have been appointed to the Office of the White House Counsel: Neha Gupta as Associate Counsel and Reema Shah as Deputy Associate Counsel. Also, for the first time in any administration, the White House would have three other South Asians in key positions. Pakistani-American Ali Zaidi as Deputy National Climate Advisor White House; Sri Lankan American Rohini

Kosoglu as Domestic Policy Advisor to the Vice President and Bangladeshi-American Zayn Siddique: Senior Advisor to the White House Deputy Chief of Staff. During the campaign, Biden had indicated that he would rope in a large number of Indian Americans. "As President, I'll also continue to rely on Indian-American diaspora, that keeps our two nations together, as I have throughout my career," Biden had said in his address to the Indian-American community during a virtual celebration of India's Independence Day on August 15, 2020. "My constituents in Delaware, my staff in the Senate, the Obama Biden administration, which had more Indian Americans than any other administration in the history of this country and this campaign with Indian Americans at senior levels, which of course includes the top of the heap, our dear friend (Kamala Harris) who will be the first Indian American vice president in the history of the United States of America," Biden said in his video address.

Biden names Bangladeshi-American Zayn Siddique to key WH position

United States President-elect Joe Biden has named Bangladeshi-American Zayn Siddique to a key position in the office of the White House deputy chief of staff.



Washington: According to a series of new announcements made by the Biden Transition Team on Wednesday, Siddique has been named senior advisor to the White House deputy chief of staff. He becomes the first Bangladeshi-American to be named to a senior position in the incoming Biden administration. Originally from Bangladesh but raised in New York, Siddique is a graduate of the Princeton University and the Yale Law School. Currently, he is the chief of staff for the Domestic and Economic Team of the Biden-Harris Transition. He was also a member of Vice President-elect Harris's prep team for the 2020 vice-presidential debate. Previously, Siddique was the deputy policy director for Beto O'Rourke's presidential campaign and a senior policy adviser to his senate campaign.

He has also served as a law clerk

to Justice Elena Kagan of the US Supreme Court, Judge David Tatel of the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit, and Judge Dean Pregerson of the US District Court for the Central District of California. In between his clerkships, Siddique practised law as an associate at Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP. President-elect Biden has said that he will have one of the most diverse administrations in American history. Other appointments made by Biden include John McCarthy, senior adviser to the counsellor to the president; Thomas Winslow, senior adviser to the deputy chief of staff; Lisa Kohnke, director of Presidential Scheduling; Sarah Feldmann, chief of staff for the Office of the Management and Administration; Michael Leach, chief diversity and inclusion director; Christian Peele, deputy director of Management and Administration for Personnel; and Jeffrey Wexler, director of COVID-19 Operations. These diverse, qualified and experienced appointees will play key roles that will support day-to-day White House functions and facilitate broad engagement with the American people, the transition team said. "To tackle the challenges facing our country and restore faith in government, we must build an administration with experienced, principled, and dedicated appointees. These individuals are part of a White House staff that is ready to build back better immediately to make a difference in the lives of working families," Biden said. "They are accomplished public servants who will be instrumental in ensuring that our White

House is efficient and effective in delivering for the American people," he added. Vice President-elect Kamala Harris said these dedicated public servants reflected the very best of the nation. "They have the knowledge and expertise to help us meet the unprecedented challenges facing the American people. And President-elect Biden and I look forward to working with them to contain this pandemic, provide more relief for families and businesses, and

rebuild our country in a way that lifts up all Americans," she added. "Today's skilled and experienced appointees bring a commitment to public service that will further enhance our historic White House team. Each appointee will help ensure efficiency and collaboration within the White House and throughout the administration as we work to build back better and improve the lives of all Americans," said incoming White House Chief of Staff Ron Klain.

Biden picks Samantha Power, former UN envoy, for US aid post

Biden made the announcement Wednesday and said he was elevating the position to the National Security Council in the White House.

WASHINGTON: President-elect Joe Biden has selected Samantha Power, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations under President Barack Obama, to run the U.S. Agency for International Development. That's the agency that oversees U.S. foreign humanitarian and development aid. Biden made the announcement Wednesday and said he was elevating the position to the National Security Council in the White House. He called Power "a world-renowned voice of conscience and moral clarity." Power served as U.N. ambassador from 2013 to 2017. She won

a Pulitzer Prize in 2003 for her book "A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide," about the U.S. foreign policy response to genocide.



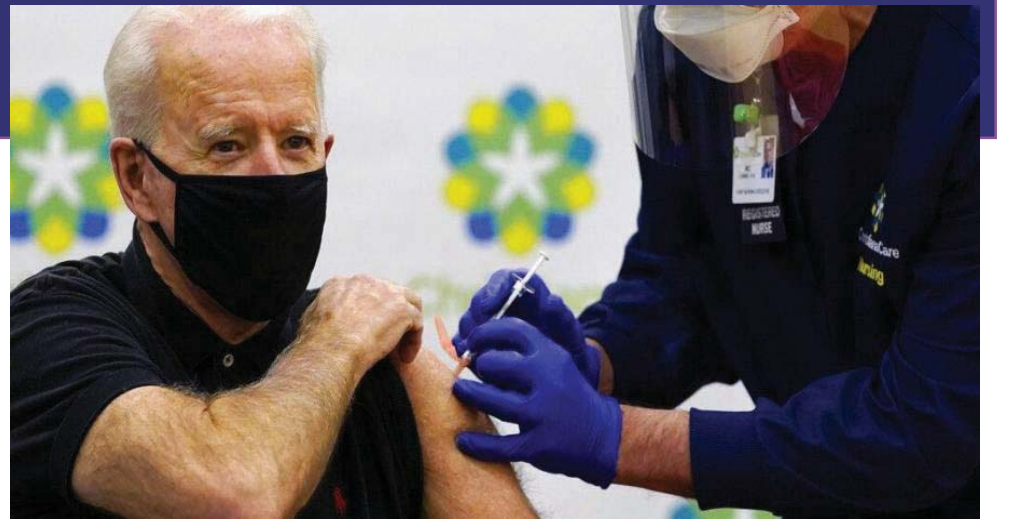
Biden gets second dose of vaccine as team readies COVID-19 plan

Biden took off his sport jacket and said, "Ready, set, go." Chief Nurse Executive Ric Cumin administered the Pfizer vaccine at Christiana Hospital in Newark, Delaware.

NEWARK: President-elect Joe Biden received his second dose of the coronavirus vaccine on Monday, three weeks after getting his first one with television cameras rolling in an attempt to reassure the American public that the inoculations are safe. Biden took off his sport jacket and said, "Ready, set, go." Chief Nurse Executive Ric Cumin administered the Pfizer vaccine at Christiana Hospital in Newark, Delaware, close to the president-elect's home. Scenes of the procedure aired on cable news moments after it occurred. Biden got his first shot on Dec. 21. The virus has now killed more than 375,000 people in the United States — about 60,000 more than when the president-elect got his first round of vaccination — and continues to upend life around the globe. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine requires a second shot about three weeks after the first vaccination. Another vaccine, this one produced by Moderna, requires a second shot about four weeks afterward. One-shot vaccines are still undergoing testing.

In comments to reporters after his shot, Biden said he has confidence in his COVID-19 medical team to hit ambitious vaccination rate targets after he takes office on Jan. 20. He also called the current rate of thousands of people dying daily because of the pandemic "beyond the pale." "The No. 1 priority is getting vaccines in people's arms as rapidly as we can," Biden said. He also said he'd spoken to Senate leaders about splitting time between approving key Cabinet nominations for his new administration and proceeding with an impeachment trial against President Donald Trump.

The House is preparing articles of impeachment against Trump — for an unprecedented second time — for helping incite last week's violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Biden told reporters he'd mentioned the possibility of going "a half day on dealing with impeachment, a half day on getting my people nominated and confirmed in the Senate, as well as moving on the package" for further actions related to the coronavirus and



economic aid. Biden said he has a virtual meeting later Monday with his virus team and planned to outline more of his pandemic response plan on Thursday. His transition team has vowed to release as many vaccine doses as possible, rather than continuing the Trump administration policy of holding back millions of doses to ensure there would be enough supply to allow those getting the first shot to get a second one. Biden's goal is to protect more people, more quickly, his team announced last week. The plan would not involve cutting two-dose vaccines in half, a strategy that top government scientists recommend against. Instead,

it would accelerate shipment of the first doses and use the levers of government power to provide required second doses in a timely manner. Like Biden, Vice President Mike Pence and other national leaders got pre-Christmas, first rounds of vaccinations. Trump did not. He was hospitalized with COVID-19 in October and given an experimental monoclonal antibody treatment that he credited for his swift recovery. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advisory board has said people who received that treatment should wait at least 90 days to be vaccinated to avoid any potential interference.

India, US negotiating on wide range of trade concerns: Congressional report

Some Members of Congress have requested that the United States Trade Representative seek to reduce the current 36 per cent tariffs faced by US pecans.

WASHINGTON: India and the US are negotiating on a wide range of trade concerns, including greater access to the Indian market for American agricultural products, potentially in exchange for America restoring New Delhi's status under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), according to a Congressional report.

President Donald Trump in 2019 terminated India's designation as a beneficiary developing nation under the key GSP trade programme after determining that it has not assured the US that it will provide equitable and reasonable access to its markets.

"The United States and India are negotiating on a wide range of trade concerns, including greater access to the Indian market for US agricultural products, potentially in exchange for US restoration of India's eligibility under GSP.

"The current status of the negotiations has not been disclosed," the latest report by independent Congressional Research Service (CRS) said.

Reports of the CRS are not an official report of the US Congress.

Its subject matter experts prepare reports on various issues for the American lawmakers to make informed decisions.

The comment on India is mentioned in the "Major Agricultural Trade Issues in the 117th Congress" dated January 8.

In September last year, the Indian government enacted three laws intended, in part, to help integrate Indian agriculture into the global market.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal in September said most issues preventing a limited trade deal between India and the United States have been resolved and an agreement could be signed anytime the political situation in the US

allows it.

India is seeking exemption from high duties imposed by the US on some steel and aluminium products, resumption of export benefits to certain domestic products under the GSP, and greater market access for its products from sectors such as agriculture, automobile, automobile components and engineering.

On the other hand, the US wants greater market access for its farm and manufacturing products, dairy items and



medical devices, apart from cut in import duties on some information and communication technology products. Noting that the United States and India view one another as important strategic partners to advance common interests regionally and globally, the CRS report said given the rapid growth in population and income among a large segment of the population,

demand for higher-value food products such as fruits, nuts, dairy products, and other livestock products is growing among Indian consumers. While India is among the world's largest producers and consumers of a range of crop and livestock commodities, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) projects that India will continue to be an important importer of dairy products, vegetable oils, pulses, tree nuts, and fruit and that it will continue to be a major exporter of rice, cotton, and buffalo meat. Observing that US-India trade negotiations follow a period of trade tensions, the CRS said in March 2018, the United States levied additional tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from India.

US President-elect Joe Biden chooses veteran diplomat William Burns as CIA director

Trump also fired several career intelligence professionals in favor of loyalists, including some with little to no experience in the field.



developed enormous respect for my colleagues in the CIA," Burns said in an online video statement Monday with Biden. "I served with them in hard places around the world. I saw firsthand the courage and professionalism that they displayed and the sacrifices that their families made."

Burns called intelligence the first line of defense for the country and the basis for making sound policy decisions. He also said he would deliver the intelligence to Biden and policymakers "without a hint of partisanship." Burns is perhaps an unconventional choice for the CIA job that many thought would go to a career intelligence officer. However, he is also deeply experienced in the kind of cloak-and-dagger secret contacts that is a

hallmark of the agency and won plaudits for his analysis and reporting abilities while he served as an American diplomat overseas. Burns was the author of some of the most insightful State Department cables that were published by Wikileaks in 2010 and is widely respected throughout the national security community. Michael Morell, a career intelligence officer and former acting director of the CIA whose name was floated to hold the top position under Biden, praised the pick, an indication that Burns likely will be embraced by the spy agency's rank and file. "I've known Bill Burns for decades. ... His command of the issues, his deep respect for intelligence, and his care for people will ensure it," Morell tweeted.

“SENIORS EXPECT BIDEN-HARRIS TO DELIVER & EXPAND SERVICES TO THIS SIGNIFICANT POPULATION”

The Founder/Executive Director of Metropolitan Asian Family Services (MAFS) / Universal Metro Asian Services (UMAS), serving the seniors of the Chicagoland area for 3 decades.



SANTOSH KUMAR
Founder & Executive Director, MAFS

We are all in the midst of a global pandemic experiencing the new normal. The world is seeing that if a successful battle has been fought anywhere across the globe against the coronavirus.

Here, Timely detection of the infected persons has helped in early treatment too. The effective clinical management strategies have shown to yield positive results. Almost 80% of the asymptomatic and mild cases have been advised home isolation under medical supervision. The strategy of home isolation for the mild and asymptomatic patients has ensured to keep the hospitals unburdened, where the focus has been on treatment of the severe cases and reduction of fatality. It is also notable that less than

1.94 per cent of the cases are in ICUs, 0.35 per cent cases are on ventilators and 2.81 per cent cases are on Oxygen beds. We need to redefine what is to take care of older family members so that task is not perceived as drudgery.

The challenge today is to build a world that is just as responsive to the needs of very old people as to the very young.” Both in western and eastern societies, the percentage of senior citizens is rising rapidly. But we aren’t conditioned for 25 or even 30 years of leisure. This poses a challenge to our current societal structure and how we adapt will affect the role of senior citizens now and for years to come.

Perspectives on the elderly are ever-changing, with treatment and respect varying from culture to culture and developing throughout different eras. Both in

Western and Eastern countries, some sectors of society may dismiss older people, as if they were only a list of care needs.

But their gray hairs and stiff joints do not prevent them from being the undeniable rock-solid foundation of our society. If we’re willing to listen and learn, it’s easy to see that their importance transcends babysitting grandchildren, storytelling, cooking and feeding.

Their bodies may be weaker, but they have an immense ocean of experience and wisdom that can serve as a beacon for younger generations. They also play a key role in teaching the youth cultural values and preserving traditions, as they are the guardians of a rich cultural heritage.

Fortunately, times are changing and newer generations are being raised in a different environment, one with the goal of protecting the older generations. Still, it is important to state that there are individuals from all cultural backgrounds willing to take care of their elderly parents out of love, respect and a strong sense of duty, but there is certainly a lot we can learn from one another. Today, seniors are able to participate in society more actively and contribute intellectually at an advanced age. But there is still work to be done. Hopefully, we can continue to progress towards becoming a society with a greater appreciation and respect for the intelligence of our senior citizens, just like the elders in Japan and Aboriginal Australia have been revered

for their wisdom for millennia. We should never doubt the contributions of our senior citizens, not as a group, not individually.

WHY ARE SENIORS IMPORTANT?

A Look at What Seniors Have to Offer

Seniors are important because of their long accumulated knowledge, experience, and wisdom.

Seniors are important because, if given the opportunity, they have much to teach us.

Seniors are important because they can be helpful in our applying lessons of life, e.g. self esteem, self respect, self discipline.

Seniors are important because they offer a great deal of satisfaction and joy to be around them.

Seniors are important because of the practical experience they offer.

Seniors are important because they have so much to give, intangibly, to us. Seniors are important because they have learned the lessons of humility. Seniors are fun companions, when we learn how to be in their company.

Seniors know things we would never guess unless we ask.

Seniors can help us deal with disappointment and grief, illness and heartache. Seniors know how important a sense of humor is.

Seniors, most of the time, know when to talk and when not to talk (sit down.)

Seniors, should take the lead to Educate, Communicate & Cooperate during this COVID pandemic.

Care of Seniors during this Covid time is vitally important. Seniors need to have a well balanced food intake always and more importantly now. Staying at home and practicing social distancing, wearing masks, frequent washing of hands with soap along with a healthy diet is the cornerstone of prevention and protection for Seniors.

Frequent monitoring of their health, including the basics ;their body temperature, blood pressure, blood sugar levels are encouraged .

We are at a good position in this coronavirus battle and will continue this fight with determination and there is no atmosphere of fear. We have the passion to battle it and enthusiasm to defeat the coronavirus. I salute all our Doctors, Nurses, health care personnel,& front line workers who are giving their best in saving lives during this pandemic.

My appreciation to all the MAFS Board, staff , volunteers and the brave MAFS Corona warriors for your valuable service during this pandemic in taking care of our precious elders. MAFS has established a proven successful multidisciplinary pathway to the empowerment of Senior Citizens

over the past 28 years. MAFS has created a broad framework for collective action for Senior Citizens to nurture their innate talents, enrich their groundbreaking ideas and engage in innovative experiences which has become a global model.

We play a vital role helping seniors of the Chicagoland Area, live independently by providing community-based care and connecting them to the services they truly deserve. Ours is one of the largest and oldest Not for Profit Organization in the US. Our services include but not limited to helping the community navigate American Government Public Policies and Benefit Programs to receive benefits in Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Access To Care, Citizenship, Immigration, Transportation, Kids Care, SSI Prescription Drugs (Medicare Part D), SNAP (Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program, LIHEAP, Direct Vendor Payment and Reconnection Assistance Cash Assistance Program, Percentage of Income Payment Plan, Furnace Assistance, Peoples Gas Share the warmth program, ComEd Residential Special hardship, Nutritional Congregate Meals Program, SAHELI Research Program, Adult Literacy Program, Memory Café and many such Public Benefit programs. We are dedicated and genuinely persevere to build a stable and strong organization through our In-Home Care Program and Adult Day Care Program. We require a plan from the most awaited BIDEN-HARRIS team to help us stand firm in the wake of challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to develop better schemes to help sustain our numerous programs to keep the vulnerable seniors of America and especially the Ethnic Speaking seniors, safe and healthy. We are eager to get an insight of your plans to help us fight the COVID-19 Pandemic, ensuring vaccination and access to Health Care and Long-Term Care. Our Seniors need housing, safe Home care, and Adult Day Care Facilities with transportation. We want a plan that will assure Safety for seniors in Nursing Homes, Better Health access to older Adults, Improve In Home Care regardless of their Income Status (their assets should not be a reason to deny their homecare) Need More Adult Day Care Services in the community to break the Isolation. We need more transportation Services for Seniors, Mental Health Centers and Nutritional Services. As a senior care provider, we are anxious to know what the BIDEN-HARRIS team is going to offer to improve the lives of our susceptible seniors.



COVID-19 VACCINATIONS NEED OF THE HOUR.

There is no doubt we are in the midst of unprecedented crisis of the life-time. COVID-19 has impacted every aspect of our livelihood and in fact created havoc in our daily activities of normal living with almost new and tragic milestones every day.

We all agree this has been a devastating year so far. More than 2 million (402,000 in US and 153,000 in India) people have died from this pandemic, with more than 96 million (24 million in US and 10 million in India) cases and of course trillions of dollars in economic damages. Millions of people are out of work and struggling to pay their bills, and millions of children are missing out on crucial time in school.

COVID-19 virus is unforgiving and does not discriminate anyone. In the US, low social economic communities like African-American and Latino communities are affected more comparing to the Caucasian communities. As wise men said all crisis lead to long lasting changes. The change of behavior has to continue and the virus has to be conquered. For that, primary prevention with mitigation measures such as social distancing; wearing the mask etc. is the most important aspect. Still we do not have a good handle on the treatment. Till the time we reach herd immunity, vaccination is the most important aspect to combat the deadly virus.

People across the world are strong committed with great resilience. Humans have never made more progress on any disease in a year than the world did on COVID-19 this year. Under normal circumstances, creating a vaccine can take 10 years. This time, multiple vaccines were created in less than one year. I consider this as a scientific modern medical miracle. Vaccines have saved tens of millions of lives in the past century. Vaccines have been

one of the biggest success stories of modern medicine along with antibiotics. Everybody should be vaccinated to decrease the mortality and morbidity from this invisible enemy. Unfortunately, we are not out of danger quite yet. Some of the computer models suggest that the pandemic could get even worse over the next month or so. We also need to learn more about new variants of the virus that has appeared in UK, South Africa etc., which seems to spread faster but not to be more deadly.

We have many reasons to be hopeful. Using the masks, social distancing, and other interventions can slow the spread of the virus and save lives while vaccines are being rolled out.

We all know there are two vaccines—one developed by Moderna, the other by Pfizer have received emergency approval in the U.S. more than 11.1 million people have gotten the vaccine so far in the US.

There are several other vaccines now undergoing efficacy studies including AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Novavax etc. Just like Moderna and Pfizer, most of these vaccines also attack the same part of the novel corona virus that is spike protein (it's the protein that spikes out of the virus)

The ones developed by Moderna and Pfizer involve what's called mRNA technology. Both these vaccines have efficacy around 94% and involve 2 doses of 3 to 4 weeks apart with minimal immediate side effects. Several studies have demonstrated that the immunity starts to build up 7th day after the first dose of Pfizer and 14th the day after the first dose of Moderna vaccine which does not have much difference in the big picture of epidemiology. Of all the vaccines that are in the pipeline, only Johnson & Johnson vaccine involves

single dose which is a DNA virus.

It's no accident that mRNA vaccines were the first to get it approved. By design, this type of vaccine can be created faster than conventional ones. It works by using messenger RNA to deliver instructions to the body to produce the distinctive spike protein. mRNA simply makes protein in the cytosol and does not enter nucleus and hence cannot alter DNA. The mRNA degenerates rapidly and does not persist in the body. Then our immune system kicks in and attacks anything with that spike on it, including the COVID-19 virus. The proteins that are made are antigenic and body makes antibodies. Making mRNA vaccines is relatively fast because it's much easier to produce large quantities of an RNA sequence that codes for the spike protein than it is to grow the spike protein itself. And there's a bonus advantage: Unlike most conventional vaccines, mRNA vaccines don't contain any virus at all, which means you can't get COVID-19 infection from them. People who are hesitant to get a COVID-19 vaccine should be reassured that the approval process in the US has been independent and transparent, made by people who have no allegiance to the federal government or to pharmaceutical companies. The fact that we went from a brand-new virus in January to a vaccine that we're putting into people in December is not compromising safety, nor is it compromising scientific integrity. It is a reflection of the extraordinary scientific advances that have been made in vaccine platform technology, which have allowed us to do things in months that normally would have taken years. There's no compromise in safety. On the other hand, India has been rolling out the world's largest and most well organized



**Dr Sreenivas Reddy, Member
Illinois Medical Disciplinary Board**

vaccination programs with anticipated 30,000 vaccinations centers and almost 3 million vaccinations per day. There are 2 vaccines approved in India Covishield and Covaxin. Covishield involves harmless viral vector (Chimpanzee virus) carrying corona virus genes when injected will stimulate the immune response. Covaxin is a live attenuated corona virus (virus is alive but rendered less infective but still able to provoke a robust immune response). Based on the immune response, the efficacy of Covishield is around 70 to 90% and Covaxin is about 60%. Shelf life of these vaccines is long of approximately 6 months when compared with the mRNA vaccines which is 5 to 10 days. Based on the data so far, the short-term side effects are minimal with both these vaccines. Many other vaccines are being in clinical trials in India because of the large population including Zydus Cadila, Sputnik v, Bioiloical E, Gennova (Mrna) etc. Like in the US, there is resistance with vaccine usage in India due to the controversy of the vaccines that were approved in a short period of time. Successful campaign programs have been started in India with sports stars, celebrities educating the people about the importance of vaccination to combat the deadly virus.

Allow States to borrow 5% of GDP, urges OPS

Tamilnadu Deputy Chief Minister puts forth slew of demands during pre-Budget meeting, chaired by Union Finance Minister



CHENNAI: Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam, who also holds the finance portfolio, on Monday put forth a slew of demands before the Centre, while preparing the 2021-22 State Budget. The demands include allowing States to borrow up to five per cent of GDP, no abrupt fiscal correction during 2021-22, discussions on continuance of the compensation mechanism and devolving further taxation powers on States, permission and fund allocation for water resource augmentation projects, early disbursement of pending dues to the State, etc.

Addressing the pre-budget meeting chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on a virtual platform, the Deputy CM said, "Though the early signs of economic revival are apparent, the financial situation of State governments would take more time to recover. Hence, no abrupt fiscal correction should be attempted during 2021-22. The transition back to fiscal targets should be through a gradual path over two to three years."

Panneerselvam also said the viability of using all measures to support growth, including the escape clause in the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act to permit the Reserve Bank of India to subscribe to the Central government's loans, should be explicitly placed on the table for consideration. "This will give confidence that the government will do what-

ever it takes to sustain growth," he added.

Pointing out that the State governments had given up their autonomy on their main source of revenue based on an assurance that the transition to the GST regime would be revenue neutral in the long run, Panneerselvam said, "The expectations of revenue growth with the implementation of GST have been belied. The reasons for this tepid revenue growth have to be analysed in detail."

"Alternatives, including continuance of the compensation mechanism and devolving further taxation powers on States will have to be discussed in the GST Council in order to ensure that States are not put to hardship in 2022-23. This very crucial issue should be addressed urgently to ensure that the interests of the States are not affected," he added.

"With regard to the local body grants in the first report of the 15th Finance Commission, the all-India ratio of rural to urban population was applied uniformly for all States. In more urbanised States like Tamil Nadu, this deprived urban areas of much needed funding. I request that this anomaly be set right when the final report of this Commission is implemented during 2021-22. Besides, no further conditions should be imposed by the Centre for the release of grants recommended by the Finance Commission to ensure that the States receive

their full share of the grants on time," he added.

The Deputy CM also pointed out that Tamil Nadu was yet to receive grants of Rs 2,577.98 crore recommended by the 14th Finance Commission for rural and urban local bodies. In fact, performance grants recommended by the 14th Finance Commission have not been released in the last three years to any State.

"Tamil Nadu has a long track record of efficient implementation of Externally Aided Projects, which later serve as models for other States and countries in project design and execution. Now the Union Finance Ministry intends to approve only one externally aided project per agency per State in a year. Such an abrupt change in policy greatly disrupts our development plans. So, the projects that are at an advanced stage of consideration should be approved for implementation without any restrictions and limitations," he added.

"At present Rs 19,591.63 crore, including pending GST compensation claims, arrears related to 13th and 14th Finance Commission grants to local bodies, and pending grants for programmes including Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Right to Education Act, Flood Management Programme, and Post-matric Scholarship Scheme, is due to Tamil Nadu. I request the Centre to release dues at the earliest," he added.



Bhutan PM wishes Modi for launching world's largest COVID-19 vaccination drive

Shots of Covishield and Covaxin vaccines were being administered at medical centres across the country.

THIMPU: Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering on Saturday congratulated his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, for the landmark launch of the world's largest COVID-19 vaccination drive, hoping it would mitigate the sufferings endured by the people due to the pandemic.

Modi on Saturday launched the world's largest vaccination drive with healthcare workers at the frontline of India's COVID-19 battle getting their first jabs, showing the light at the end of a 10-month tunnel that upended millions of lives and livelihoods.

Shots of Covishield and Covaxin vaccines were being administered at medical centres across the country. "I would like to congratulate PM @narendramodi and the people of India for the landmark launch of nation-

wide COVID-19 vaccination drive today.

We hope it comes as an answer to pacify all the sufferings we have endured this pandemic," Tshering tweeted. In a similar post on his Facebook account, Tshering said that, "in this pursuit of securing and distributing the vaccine of an impressive magnitude, Your Excellency has displayed profound and compassionate leadership.

"We send prayers for the good health and well being of Your Excellency and the people of India," Tshering added. In his reply, Modi thanked Tshering for the good wishes.

"Thank you @PMBhutan! A vaccine, which was earlier believed to be impossible in such a short time period has become a reality thanks to efforts of our

scientists, doctors and innovators," he tweeted. India is ready to do everything possible for a healthy planet, Modi said.

Earlier, launching the drive, Modi reminded people that two doses of the vaccine are very important and asked them to continue with masks and social distancing even after receiving the jabs. Reassuring people that emergency use authorisation was given to the two 'made in India' vaccines only after scientists were convinced of their safety and effectiveness, he said the vaccines will ensure a decisive victory for the country over the coronavirus pandemic. "Dawaai bhi, kadaai bhi," Modi said, asking people to guard against complacency and follow COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.



Too much democracy for mandarins?



Over the centuries, the instrument of power passed from the common to the privileged, thereby perverting the sanguine spirit of democracy.

By Prabhu Chawla

Democracy is both an idea and an ideal. It is also an initiation and an institution. It thrives and survives on the principle of maximum participation. An ancient Greek political and philosophical architecture of governance, the term surfaced around 507 BC in Athens. Its etymology is a combination of 'demos' (common people) and 'kratos' (power). Over the centuries, the instrument of power passed from the common to the privileged, thereby perverting the sanguine spirit of democracy. The ballot in the hands of people has become a bullet in the hands of the executive, which imposes its subjective authority and restricts the contours of inclusive discourse.

The width, breadth and height of the democratic edifice are now decided by a cunning cabal, which acquires powers by selection not an election. Their postures and utterances have portrayed democracy as a demon. It is now diminishing the power of those elected by the people to work for their welfare. The erudite and highly visible faces of the New Establishment are scripting its new narrative.

Last week, Amitabh Kant, the NITI Aayog's flamboyant and cocktail CEO, defined democracy's quantitative limit. Speaking at a media conclave, he announced shockingly, "Tough reforms are very difficult in the Indian context, we are too much of a democracy."

Since Kant is considered the most powerful official voice on every subject under the political sun, his opinion is being interpreted as a reflection of the political leadership's current mood.

His claim to fame is just one slogan. All other projects entrusted to him over the past two decades remain incomplete. He ignores the fact that it is the excessive democratic process that has ensured him plum posts in almost every government ruled by the extreme Left to the current one.

As he is the only retired IAS officer, amongst 100 other compatriots holding sensitive posts, who have been given the mandate to authoritatively articulate and interpret policies and initiatives, his remarks placed the blame for tardy decision-making on gagging internal dissent on the government.

In a democracy, it is the political leadership and not the Civil Service, which normally expresses opinion on the efficacy of institutions. Since most Central ministers confine themselves to their own departments and policies, Kant has

acquired the image of an information treasure chest to be mined to gauge the sarkar's mood.

Ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi anointed him to his present post, Kant has expounded on all subjects from potatoes to politics. Subsequently, his comments, though querulously questioned by himself subsequently, became a major embarrassment for the government.

Both MSM (Main Stream Media) and SM (Social Media) questioned Kant's prognosis of what ails the economy. At a time when Modi's detractors are charging his administration with gagging dissent and demolishing democratic symbols, Kant couldn't have given a more lethal weapon to the Opposition with his unsolicited opinion.

As the furore took a furious turn, many Union ministers disowned Kant's words of wishful wisdom and declared their unflinching faith in democracy. The foot-in-the-mouth bureaucrat wrote articles in newspapers and behaved like a politician by accusing the media of quoting his remarks out of context. But video cameras record what the eyes see. Finally, it was left to Modi to publicly distance his government from the unacceptable conclusion drawn by one of his pencil pushers.

Though there wasn't any direct connection, the PM, while speaking at the foundation stone ceremony of the new Parliament building, asserted: "Democracy is not merely a system of governance for us. Democracy is in India's ethos for centuries. A democratic temperament is a part of our culture...democracy is a way of life in India... It won't be long before the world would say that India is the Mother of Democracy."

Modi is aware that he, and many others like him hailing from ordinary backgrounds, is the creation of democratic power play. Unlike babus who enter the power palace through written and oral examinations, leaders have to convince the masses about their relevance and identity.

Modi could survive as the Gujarat's CM for 12 years in an extremely hostile national environment and later become the PM precisely due to "too much of democracy". The BJP emerged as the majority party after almost three decades, not due to bureaucratic file movers but because of the faith in the ballot. Actually, it is the malicious mandarin who pollutes the minds of leaders to not only consolidate their own power and continuity, but also to cover up their own failures. In a democracy, public outrage takes an ugly turn

when the masses discover that their elected leaders are falling short on their promises.

Since netas only draw the big picture, they leave it to the civil servants to ensure timely delivery. Rebellion is brewed out of distress everywhere. Mahatma Gandhi used "too much of democracy" to bring down the British Empire. So many freedom fighters died defending "too much of democracy". Nelson Mandela used his prison torture to fan the democratic process and deposed apartheid. The entire culturally diverse Europe and the UK surrendered a part of their sovereign rights to form the EU, thanks to democracy because the people thought it was in their interest. It is also democracy that led to Brexit and the resignation of the UK prime minister.

If some Middle Eastern Islamic monarchies have partially liberalised their social order, it is due to the realisation on their part that democratic will ultimately get the better of their royal order. In Independent India, Jaiprakash Narain united wide swathes of his countrymen to combat Indira Gandhi's non-performing and corrupt Congress government.

She then used state power to strangle democratic voices. Finally, she had to yield and lost the elections. Most of the current leaders including the prime minister, Mamata Banerjee, Chandrashekhar Rao, Jagan Reddy, Jayalalithaa and Lalu are the fruits of "too much democracy". If some of them like Mayawati and the Gandhis have been marginalised, the responsibility goes to democratic hammer sledging. Despite cultural, linguistic and religious diversities, India has survived as a united nation because its citizens can exercise their right to elect or reject their rulers.

India has become one of the world's top five economies due to the maximum participation of all its stakeholders. Half a dozen national and over 40 regional and state parties are not only flourishing, but also ruling some of the states owing to free and fair democratic verdict. Since democracy demands vigorous scrutiny at every level, only incompetent dilettantes would cherish the idea of curbing the freedom of expression. India is truly a democracy ruled by a "government of the people, by and for the people".

Any Doubting Thomas should be dumped before they subvert the system. Or else, there will be no Credible India, only Indie-populism and Incredible Inanity.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, DRR, AND DISASTER RESILIENCE: AN OVERVIEW

Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Disaster Resilience

Climate change, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation reduces the resilience of communities and increases the vulnerability to the impact of climate change causing natural disasters, which is a major threat to sustainable development.

Disaster risk is increasing globally and threatening development gains, owing largely to a mix of flawed urban development, climate change, and ecosystem degradation. People around the world constantly seek ways to reduce disaster risks and techniques to adapt to changing climate. Some combine diverse livelihood strategies, such as fishing, farming and selling by manual labor, in order to reduce their vulnerability, while others use knowledge (indigenous and new techniques) to obtain information about various adaptation skills in agriculture and plan their actions accordingly.

Projected change in the climate includes increased temperature on land and sea, sea-level rise, melting of glacier and ice cap, irregular rainfall, drought pattern increasing the intensity and frequency of extreme climatic events, thereby, making people more vulnerable to hydro-meteorological disasters. However, disaster risk and the impact of changing climate can be minimized significantly by restoring and protecting ecosystems, thereby increasing a community's resilience to climate change. Addressing vulnerability and decreasing exposure to hazards by adaptation and building risk-resilience capacity of the community are within wider efforts to address poverty and inequality, leading to sustainable development.

Measures taken in the form of preparedness, based on advanced technology in early warning systems lead to DRR, which in turn leads to sustainable development. An example to explain how public awareness through education and capacity building leads to DRR further leading to sustainable development is- 'the villagers were concerned that their intensive farming practices were eroding the river banks, and so they had started a tree nursery, planting saplings along the banks to help bind the soil'.

Hazards are inherent in the environment we live in. Many hazards are not turning into disasters because of increased public awareness, facilitating increased resilience in communities besides ever-increasing advancement in technology which is ever upgradable.

Governments and civic society have launched many programs for capacity building in the community through education. Indian school textbooks, from class 6th to 12th, has disaster management as a subject that has empowered children with knowledge about preparedness and early warning systems, leading to transfer of knowledge to their family members and friends in the community.

The Indian government has launched Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan that too leads to public awareness about preparedness before and during the disaster. Community-led early warning systems, through social media such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook facilitate village communities using affordable smartphones to know the likelihood of potential hazards, which they share with the community as the bottom-up transfer of knowledge, creating resiliency in the community.

What we build and where we build after

disasters have occurred, are the indicators of resilience in the society leading to sustainable development.

Key Words: Sustainable Development, Resilience, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation, Vulnerability Introduction

Natural hazards are a cause of global food insecurity and hunger, particularly when they compound existing economic vulnerability. Large shocks and extensive risks destroy agriculturally assets and infrastructure, causing serious damage to the livelihoods and food security of millions of small farmers, pastoralists, and fishers in many developing countries. Often, people depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and face increasing exposure to disaster risk which can trap them in a cycle of food insecurity and poverty. The high impact of disaster and climate risk on agriculture calls for enhanced mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation strategies within the agriculture sector. Target 2.4 supports the immediate need to advance actions in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation into agriculture sector planning and investments in order to promote resilient livelihoods, food production and ecosystems. In the context of the Sendai Framework, relevant actions including strengthening productive assets such as livestock, working animals, tools and seeds are required to achieve this goal and target.

Sustainable development and Disaster resilience through disaster risk reduction are two sides of the same coin (UNDP). Disaster risk reduction is viewed as the systematic development and application of policies, strategies, and practices to minimize vulnerabilities and risks throughout society to avoid (prevention) or limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impact of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development (ISDR 2002) disaster reduction policies should have a two-fold aim:

- To enable societies to be resilient to natural hazards;
- To ensure that development efforts do not increase vulnerability

Disaster risk and resilience¹ received insufficient emphasis in the original Millennium Development Goal agenda, despite the relationship between disasters and development. Whilst there is universal acceptance that disasters can erode and destroy development gains, there is limited recognition of the role that different approaches to development play in creating or increasing vulnerability. Reducing the risks of disasters (for example prevention, preparedness, and early warning systems) for predictable events like the major severe weather impact conditions such as cyclones, large storms, heavy precipitation events, heat and cold waves, helps to protect both human and economic assets. The focus on the disaster risk reduction is based on the understanding that with proper planning of development programs and integrating disaster risk reduction in the development strategies, the negative effects of development can be reduced, while the positive effects can be enhanced through the reduction of poverty, improvement of human livelihoods and coping strategies and overall reduction

of vulnerability (UNISDR, AES, 2014) 14. Now the manmade activities leading to creation of potential hazards, which includes the vulnerability of the community and exposure to the new risks arising out of climate change need to be included in the effort of creating resilient societies.

As we near 2015, we now have a clearer understanding of trends (for example through climate and weather related evidence), that show how the impact of disasters caused by natural hazards and vulnerability will continue to intensify, presenting an increasingly significant challenge to development. Disaster risk reduction and resilience therefore requires more central consideration in the post-2015 development agenda if the objectives of sustainable development are to be achieved.

Resilience -A Prerequisite to DRR.

The successful Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) creates resilient communities (UNDP, 2004, UNISDR, 2004) while ensuring that vulnerability is not increased through development efforts or other externally initiated activities. The resilience of the community is recognized to depend upon the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events. While resilience is rooted in the local communities affected by disasters, it involves a wide variety of stakeholders, including families, the private sector, governments, academia, nonprofit groups, and faith-based groups on local, state, and national scales. It is important to recognize that planning for one kind of disaster can increase the community's resilience in the face of a different kind of event. This "all-hazards" approach is a condition to which all communities and the nation should aspire for. Understanding and managing disaster risk is critical to increasing resilience to disasters.

The Tools to manage disaster risk include both structural and nonstructural measures and approaches, which are complementary and can be used together. The requisites to show the resilience for all the societies may be outlined as the robust framework having essential services such as health, education, public and private infrastructure the capacity of the Individuals and groups to understand and know about the risks and how to reduce them. Achieving resilience is a shared responsibility of the State along with the community and the Disaster Managers, requiring the engagement of everyone having stakes in DRR. A Coalition is a key to improving the resilience of a community's critical infrastructure and systems, such as power and water systems, health care services, and transportation systems while creating synergy in the efforts of the public and private sectors towards DRR. (Disaster Resilience a National Imperative, 2012)

Disasters and Disaster Risk Reduction and Development Challenge

Vulnerability and exposure to disasters is increasing as more people and assets located in areas of high risk. Since 1970, the world's population has grown by 87 percent. During the same time, the proportion of people living in flood-prone river basins increased by 114 percent and on cyclone-exposed coastlines by 192 percent. More than half of the world's large cities, with populations ranging from 2 to 15 million, are located in areas of high earthquake risk. Rapid urbanization will increase exposure to natural hazards, especially in coastal zones.



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From the year 2000 till 2017 deaths related to natural hazards have exceeded 4.1 million; over 2.7 billion people have been affected. Another concern is the economic impact of disasters. Over the last 12 years USD 1.7 trillion has been lost to disasters. The trend is rising and now exceeds, on average, USD 100 million per year over the last decade.

Based, in particular, on Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change reports we expect climate change to increase the frequency and intensity of the most severe weather-related hazards over the next decades. In addition to climate change, the main drivers of risk are poorly planned and managed urbanization, environmental degradation, poverty, and weak governance. Disaster vulnerability is reduced as a direct product of sound development. In light of the growing levels of risk of disasters, reducing them should be part of the post2015 development agenda in order to meet international development objectives. Which now exceeds, on average, USD 100 million per year over the last decade.

Based, in particular, on the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change reports, we expect climate change to increase the frequency and intensity of the most severe weather-related hazards over the next decades. In addition to climate change, the main drivers of risk are poorly planned and managed urbanization, environmental degradation, poverty and weak governance. Disaster vulnerability is reduced as a direct product of sound development. In light of the growing levels of risk of disasters, reducing them should be part of the post-2015 development agenda in order to meet international development objectives. Communities will have to adapt even more to these stressful environmental conditions, through disaster risk reduction and resilience-building measures. This will especially impact on least-developed countries and Small Island Developing States. While all countries are vulnerable (as demonstrated by the Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami) the impact disasters have on Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States is perhaps the most challenging. For these States, disaster events have a significant impact on, or in some cases completely destroy, development gains built up over decades. Hurricane Ivan (2004) cost Grenada over 200 percent of GDP.

USA, France, AND UK HAVE BEEN KEY DRIVERS IN SUPPORTING INDIA EFFORT UNDER ABLE LEADERSHIP OF DYNAMIC PM OF INDIA, SHRI MODY IN REDUCING GREEN GAS EMISSIONS.



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TAXI TALKS – HEALERS OR PREDATORS !!!



Prathiba Nair

Guest Relations Manager - AUREVOIR

Being into this profession I was always blessed to have the opportunity of making a travel with so different kinds of people (Both National & International). This made me to understand and realise that every human being although is different but each one of us have a common factor, that's our EMOTIONS.

Here, I share with you an understanding of mine from a discussion recently with a very lovable person who is basically a doctor and her stay with us was for Stress & Strain from Tanzania. We were on the way to hospital and she happened to ask me certain doubts related to the medical policies, situations in different places globally, public health

etc. was really put into deep thinking by her when she shared some painful information. How Human race is against the human race just for the sake of financial benefits & personal growth? Everything is Business & corrupted.....!!!!

Not all, but yes, majority of the health facilitators are corrupted and this is just an antithesis of patient centred care. Driven by greed, those in power divert crucial resources away from patients in need which results in poor quality of care and worsening health outcomes. It is an international problem and no health system is free from it. Corruption, an undeniable reality in the health sector, is arguably the most serious ethical crisis in Medicine today. However, it remains poorly addressed by scholarly journals, professional associations & Bioethicists. Any middle-class family when approaches a hospital for any reason, the first important thing that they need to do is an arrangement of the financial part however their situation is, does not matter. After all who will take the risk of taking a chance with the life of their loved ones. At a seminar in the Govt. Medical College, Kozhikode in Kerala Dr Nandi said that "Indian doctors were going to America & Europe because Merit was not being recognised here due to Corruption. Our Heroes should not be people who make a lot of money from Corporate Hospi-

tals, but doctors of Yesteryear like P.K. Sethi of the Jaipur foot who spent all their lives in Medical College, advancing medicines and educating young.

"Sama Dosha, Sama Agni, Sama Dhatumalakriya....

Prasannatma Indriya Mana Swastha lthyabideeyathi....

If we just take a glance in the traditional Ayurveda defines the balancing of body and soul will never lead to bad health and that is the reason the health problems were almost zero decades ago. This learning was given to the next generation Medical professionals "Serving Mankind is serving God "And the current scenario is that the system is the root cause of unethical ways chosen by some doctors and few powerful big shots.

Exceptional are everywhere. Isn't it? Salluting each professional in the Medical field who stayed with the common citizen for all their safety, taking risks for their life during this Pandemic – 2020. It is important for us to understand that not all are Financially Sound, there rises situations when your pocket is empty and your loved ones suddenly need a hospitalisation. Every citizen globally, should have a confidence to immediately move to any Medical purpose to safeguard the life without any hesitations or a fear of being ignored or not considered as important just because of their Financial constraints. They should not

be taken for granted.

Medical accountability is an issue of paramount importance and should not be ignored. Medical Profession is considered as a noble profession and the moral responsibility cannot be evaded. Indian doctors have huge expertise but as a group, our reputation is poor. So, the question is what can be done?

Strengthening good governance and preventing corruption in the health care are universal challenges.

Effective laws and policies by the government, continued role of media and strong action by the regularly body are needed. It is necessary to make the people aware about their needs and rights for better regulation of Medical practices and education. Government only can enact laws for effective and proper functioning of Private hospitals & a responsible functioning of the government hospitals. This Pandemic was a real learning to each one of us as how important is Medical Professionals, how mandatory is the advance medicining and what would a common man do if this system is hit. "If it were easy, everyone would be a doctor, this is the best job in the world. Despite Everything, because of everything. "Wherever the art of medicine is loved, there is also a love of humanity. The lessons you are learning today will save the life of someone tomorrow, Pay attention!!!

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| India Power Award 2008 | Golden Peacock Award 2007 | Dun & Bradstreet PSU Award in the NBFC Category
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Campaign kick off for Vasavi Chakka

FIRST ASIAN AMERICAN KICKS OFF CAMPAIGN FOR NAPERVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEMBER 2021
Naperville is a city , 45 km west of Chicago , Illinois and founded in 1831. Naperville developed into the **THIRD LARGEST CITY** in the State of Illinois.



Community Leader, Small Business Owner, Vasavi Chakka officially launched her campaign on Saturday January 16, 2021 at the Mall of India, Naperville.



Dr. Uma Katiki, Community Activist endorsing Vasavi Chakka described her as a fierce and passionate community leader who believes in civic engagement.



Dr. Suresh Reddy, AAPI Past President and Distinguished Physician of Oak Brook Village, Illinois lauded Vasavi Chakka's efforts to stand up for the Asian American Community and predicted her victory in the April 2021 elections.



The Family of Vasavi Chakka, Husband Dr.Sridhar Chakka, Daughter Siri and Son Prahith were on hand to support their mother to run for office.



IT Giant and Founder-Chairman of Indian Community Outreach, Naperville Krishna Bansal gave a rousing clarion call to the community to vote for Vasavi Chakka , the First Indian American Lincoln Scholar to the City Council. Bansal urged the community to volunteer for the campaign by Phone banking, Knocking on Doors and spreading the word about Vasavi's candidacy.



Vasavi Chakka's Campaign Manager Jesus Solorio spoke about the need to reach out to all sections of the community during the next ten weeks and ensure Chakka's victory which will make history as the **FIRST Asian American** to be elected to Naperville city Council.



Telugu Community Leader Dinakar Karumuri endorsed Vasavi Chakka, a long time Naperville resident who is fighting for reform and change. Dinakar also recalled how Chakka 's relentless efforts brought about STEM education in 204 School district.



Campaign Youth Chair Gautham Jaiganesh gave an inspiring address of how important is for the youth to get involved in civic engagement and especially in the development of the City of Naperville. This election is not about an individual Vasavi but about us the Community to be heard and be represented , he thundered.



Dynamic Anica Dubey , Campaign Community Relations Chair who served as the co host for the event applauded the community in coming out in such good numbers to cheer and support Vasavi in her journey to Naperville City Council and exhorted the whole community to be united in ensuring Vasavi's victory.



Naperville City Councilman Kevin Coyne , Business Attorney and Community Leader endorsing Vasavi Chakka for the City Council said that Vasavi's eye on economic development and fiscal oversight of the City will be a great asset to Naperville.



The show stopper was the presence of Sixth generation Naperville resident Paul Hinterlong who embodies Naperville's Spirit of Community Volunteerism and serves on Naperville City Council from May 2009 till present. Councilman Paul Hinterlong heartily endorsed Vasavi Chakka and said she is well suited for the office.



Campaign Outreach Chair Ratna Kapur , Founder of KS Foundation saluted Vinoz Chanamolu, CEO and Pramod Chintamaneni, COO of the Mall of India, Naperville for their generous support by donating space for Vasavi's campaign office and hosting this kick off event. Kapur said both of them led by example, "Actions speaks louder than Words."

Campaign kick off for Vasavi Chakka

FORMER STATE COMPTROLLER & STATE REP DARLENE SENGER CHAIRS CHAKKA'S CAMPAIGN
ACCORDING TO THE 2016 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, POPULATION OF NAPERVILLE IS 141,122 WITH A RACIAL MAKE UP OF NAPERVILLE BEING 76.5% WHITE, 14.9% ASIAN, 5.3% HISPANIC AND 4.7% AFRICAN AMERICAN.



Campaign Chair Darlene Senger, former Illinois State Comptroller & State Representative of IL-46th District welcomed the candidacy of Vasavi Chakka for the four current vacancies of the Naperville City Council where 11 candidates are contesting the April 6, 2021 election. Chair Darlene Senger underscored the importance of reaching out to the community by phone calls and personalizing the campaign at the grassroots level.



Young Gauri Yadav, a High School Senior gave a powerful rendition of America's National Anthem that opened the kick off ceremonies of Vasavi Chakka's campaign. The talented Singer Gauri Yadav got a standing ovation and ushered in a spirit of unity.



Ma Santosh Kumar, Senior Community Leader blessed Vasavi Chakka to be victorious in her campaign and said that Vasavi Chakka is the best candidate for Naperville City Council. Dr Kumar added that Chakka is a proven leader with fortitude, commitment and integrity that will shine for the community.



U.S. Congressional Multi Ethnic Advisory Task Force (MEATF) Chairman Martino Tangkar endorsed Vasavi Chakka for Naperville City Council. Tangkar said that Chakka will add the much needed diversity to Naperville City Council in this digital age.



Vinoz Chanamolu, CEO, MALL OF INDIA, Naperville & Executive of IT SERVE, Chicago congratulated Vasavi Chakka in following in the footsteps of fellow elected Indian American leaders from the State of Illinois, U.S. Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthy and State Senator Ram Villivallam.



American Mutli Ethnic Coalition (AMEC) Vice President Neelam Dwivedi, popularly known as Bihari Beti presented AMEC's endorsement to Vasavi Chakka for Naperville city council in recognition of her inclusive leadership and relentless pursuit of excellence for our community's youth over the years.



Vasavi Chakka flanked by Telugu Community leaders Manne Lingiah From Naperville and Ms. Chandini Divoori of Chicago Andhra Association.



Campaign Advisory Panel Chief Dr. Santosh Kumar, Chairman of Global Strategic Alliance Inc., Dr. Vijay G. Prabhakar and Maharashtra Mandal President Vidya Joshi cheering Vasavi Chakka's candidacy for Naperville City Council.



Ravikumar Govindaraj, a Naperville resident and enthusiastic volunteer for Vasavi Chakka For Naperville since October 2020. Special appreciation for Ravikumar G's innumerable hours of support that he is rendering to the campaign. Chakka's campaign runs on the likes of Ravi G.



Indian American Candidates who are running for elections in other parts of Illinois showed up to support Vasavi Chakka, left to right: Dr. Suresh Reddy (Oak Brook Village Trustee), Shweta Baid (Aurora 10th Ward Alderman), Vasavi Chakka (Naperville City Councilman), Meghna Bansal (Wheatland Township Trustee) and Rajesh Narayan (Naperville School Dist #204 Board Member)



Midway Business Brokers CEO Ajeeth Singh and Indian American Christian Council Secretary Satish Dadepogu enjoying the kick off celebrations



Vasavi Chakka flanked by Campaign Chair Darlene Senger and Campaign Advisory Panel Chief Dr. Santosh Kumar, Naperville City Councilmen Kevin Coyne and Paul Hinterlong along with the Campaign Committee leaders at the kick-off event



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PLEASE EMAIL TO amec.2018@yahoo.com THE NAME OF YOUR NOMINEE, WITH
COMPLETE CONTACT INFORMATION: OCCUPATION/ DESIGNATION, MAILING
ADDRESS, PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPH, EMAIL ID & CONTACT PHONE NUMBER WITH A
BRIEF RESUME/C.V AND A STATEMENT FROM THE NOMINATOR ON RATIONALE FOR
NOMINATING THE ORGANIZATION/ INDIVIDUAL ON OR BEFORE **April 1, 2021****

**The 2020 Awards Jury will shortlist the nominees and inform the nominees as and
when they need more information.**

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Outstanding student of The Year(Spiritual) | 18. Community Leadership Award |
| 2. Outstanding student of The Year(Academic) | 19. Style Icon of The Year |
| 3. Young Physician of The Year | 20. Golden eagle Award |
| 4. Outstanding student of The Year(Sports) | 21. Outstanding Student of The Year(Service) |
| 5. Youth of The Year | 22. Attorney of The Year |
| 6. Man of The Year | 23. Couple of The Year |
| 7. Women of The Year | 24. Danny K.Davis Peace Prize |
| 8. Life Time Achievement award | 25. International Woman of The Year |
| 9. Organization of The Year | 26. Community Activist of The Year |
| 10. Light of Ife Award | 27. Journalist of The Year |
| 11. Family of The year | 28. Mental Health Advocate of The Year |
| 12. Music Moghul of The Year | 29. Educator of The Year |
| 13. Humanitarian of The Year | 30. Community Service Award |
| 14. Entrepreneur of The Year | 31. Corporate of The Year |
| 15. International rising star of The Year | 32. Administrator of The Year |
| 16. Distinguished Leadership Award | 33. International Man of The Year |
| 17. Businessman of The Year | |



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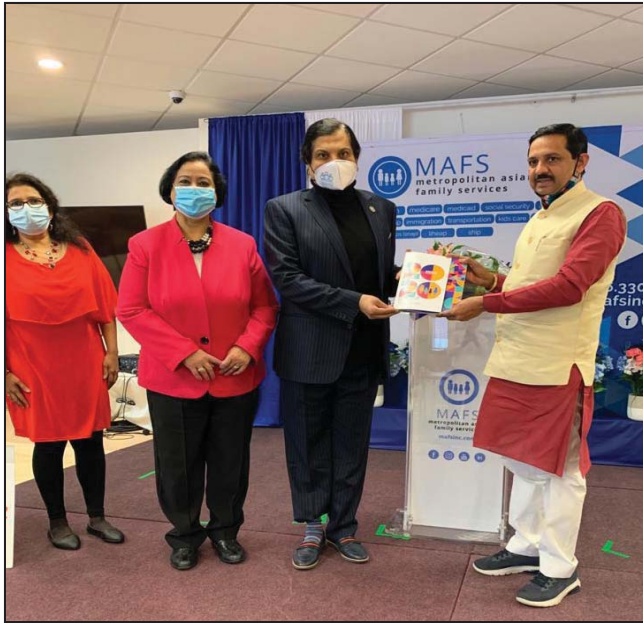
Outstanding Women from different walks of life whose work has made a difference in people's lives and has not been showcased previously, request to email their accomplishments and bio on or before February 1st, 2021 to amec.2018@yahoo.com

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BJP LEADER ANAND SAHU'S MAIDEN VISIT TO CHICAGO, USA



Ma Santosh Kumar , Founder of MAFS & UMAS receives Anand Sahu at MAFS Schaumburg office .Dr Vijay Prabhakar, Chairman Global Strategic Alliance Inc. also in the picture.



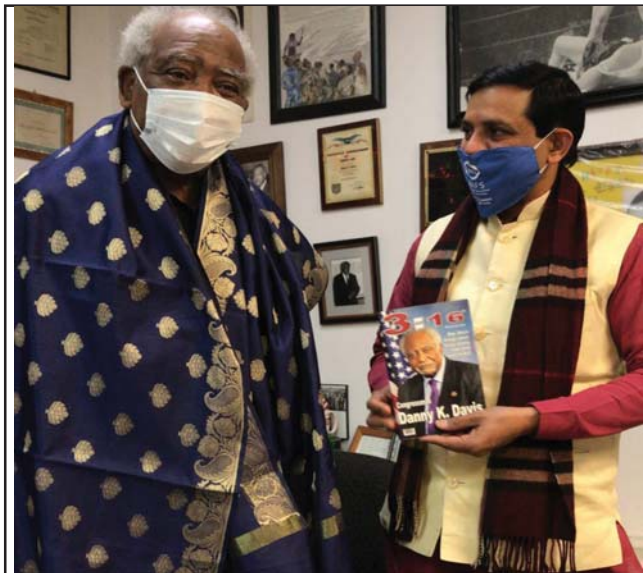
Anand Sahu, Member Hindi Advisory Committee, Ministry of Finance, Govt. Of India receiving the MAFS Annual Report 2020 highlighting the MAFS Hindi Academy.



U. S. Congressman Danny Davis being honored with a traditional silk shawl by Anand Sahu when he called on him at Congressman's Chicago office.



Anand Sahu , Member Minimum Wages Advisory Board, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. Of India explaining to Congressman Davis the positive aspects of the recently introduced Farm Bills in India.



U. S. Congressman Danny K Davis, Ranking Member of the House Ways & Means Committee presenting a book to Anand Sahu, Senior BJP leader from Delhi.



Anand Sahu, BJP Nationalist Thinker Speaker called on India's Consul General at Chicago Amit Kumar in his office.



Left to Right : Dr Vijay Prabhakar, Chairman GSA, Anand Sahu , Consul General Amit Kumar and Dr Santosh Kumar, Founder MAFS & UMAS.



Anand Sahu having a meeting with OFBJP Chicago leaders Amar Upadhyay, Rohit Joshi, Soham Upadhyay and Senior VHP & HSS leader Sridhar Damle on December 25 morning.



Ma Santosh Kumar hosted a Christmas Day Brunch at her home in South Barrington for Chicago leaders to hear Anand Sahu's update on P. M. Modi's recent reforms.



OFBJP Chicago Coordinator presents a memento to Anand Sahu while Ma Santosh Kumar, Amar Upadhyay, And Sridhar Damle look on.



Amar Upadhyay, National General Secretary of Overseas Friends of BJP- USA presenting a City of Chicago memento to Anand Sahu on his maiden visit to Chicago.



Anand Sahu, BJP Nationalist Thinker Speaker & National Secretary, Bharatiya Janta Mazdoor Mahasangh, Delhi with Chicago youth leaders Prashant Kumar, Sagar Kumar and Soham Upadhyay.

How The Biden-Harris Administration Could Affect Students Across America



Gautham Jai Ganesh



During the '20-'21 school year, roughly 93% of American households with K-12 students reported that their children engaged in some kind of online/distance learning. On top of elementary through high schoolers, nearly every American university has offered their students some form of online learning option, with many colleges even cancelling in-person learning for the Fall 2020 semester. With the majority of schools having gone online in early March 2020, education for students has been completely changed by the rampant spread of the coronavirus. The big question on many students' minds is what Biden taking office means for their educational experience.

The Biden administration's success in handling the current pandemic will play a serious role in the education of America's youth. President Biden has already laid out his plan to administer 100 million vaccines in his first 100 days in office. With more a more rigid and effective response to the pandemic being announced, students across the country are hopeful that their education can return to normal for the 2021-2022 school year. Beyond a return to normal schooling and in-person education, the Biden administration also means hope for college students ridden with debt. President Biden has called for Congress to forgive \$10,000 in student debt per

borrower, a step in the direction towards lowering the ever-increasing student debt America faces. Although President Biden is a bit more conservative than some of his fellow Democrats such as Bernie Sanders, the transition from a Republican to Democrat party holding office has given many students hope that progress can be made in providing college education at lower prices to university students. While things such as free state university education are not realistic goals that can be achieved under Biden's term, the future of the next four years does hold promise of improving the quality and cost of education in America - on both the K-12 and university levels.

A new beginning with President Biden and Vice President Harris



I am extremely thrilled to celebrate the victory of President-Elect Joe Biden and Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris in the recent Presidential election. As a Board Member of South Asians for Biden, I know the Indian American community played a key role in engaging and mobilizing voters in large numbers to elect the Biden-Harris ticket. The election results demonstrated that every phone call to an undecided voter, every conversation we had with a friend or family member about what this election means had a significant impact on the outcome.

The Biden-Harris administration will move our country forward in the right direction ensuring prosperity for all people irrespective of their race, color, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. The Indian American diaspora is elated to know that US President-elect Joe Biden has named more than 20 Indian-

Americans as members, including three as team leads, to his agency review teams (ARTs) that are responsible for evaluating the operations of the key federal agencies in the current administration to ensure smooth transfer of power. At least three Indian Americans have been named as team leads to various ARTs. Arun Majumdar from the prestigious Stanford University is the team lead for the Department of Energy ART. Rahul Gupta is the team lead for Office of National Drug Control Policy. Kiran Ahuja has been named Team Lead for Office of Personnel Management. Puneet Talwar has been named to the Department of State ART. Pav Singh has been named to two ARTs for National Security Council and Office of Science and Technology. Similarly, Arun Venkatraman has been named to two ARTs Department of Commerce and USTR. Other prominent Indian Americans named to ARTs are Pravina Raghavan, Atman Trivedi for

Department of Commerce and Shital Shah for Department of Education; R Ramesh and Rama Zakaria for the Department of Energy; Subhasri Ramanathan for the Department of Homeland Security; Raj De for Department of Justice; and Seema Nanda and Raj Nayak for Department of Labour. Reena Aggarwal, and Satyam Khanna have been named to the Federal Reserve, Banking and Securities Regulators ARTs; Bhavya Lal for NASA; Dilpreet Sidhu for National Security Council, Divya Kumaraiah for Office of Management and Budget; Kumar Chandran for Department of Agriculture; and Aneesh Chopra to US Postal Service. "We are enthused by the incoming Biden-Harris administration's recognition of the contributions of our South Asian community. They have selected several talented individuals for key roles, including Neera Tanden, Vivek Murthy, Rohini Kosoglu, Ali Zaidi, Bharat Ramamurti, Vedant Patel, Vinay Reddy and Gautam Raghavan. We look forward to their service on behalf of the country," said Neha Dewan, national director, South Asians for Biden. US President-elect Joe Biden on Monday, January 11th named two Indian Americans Reema Shah as the Deputy Associate Counsel and Neha Gupta, as Associate Counsel in the Office of the White House Counsel. "My administration has no greater task than restoring faith in American government. Our White House Counsel's Office will be built upon a foundation of integrity and honesty. This qualified and crisis-tested legal team will



Shree Gurusamy
Board Member,
South Asians for Biden

ensure that this administration is accountable and always operates in service of the American people," said Biden. Vice President-elect Kamala Harris said: "The American people deserve a government that is open, honest, and transparent. These dedicated public servants will help us meet the unprecedented challenges facing our nation while upholding the highest standards of ethics and integrity". I eagerly look forward to US President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration as the 46th US President on January 20, who has lived up to his promise to build the most diverse Cabinet in US history representing the people of this great country. God Bless America.

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ਅੱਜ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਸਨੌਹ ਤੇ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਫੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਅਥਾਹ ਸ਼ਰਧਾ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਾਡੇ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਾਜ਼ਮਾਨ ਹਨ । ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ 2014 ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ । ਅਹੁਦਾ ਸੰਭਾਲਦਿਆਂ ਸਾਰ ਹੀ ਤੁਰੰਤ ਨੌਸ ਦੇਸ਼ਲੈ ਲੈ ਕੇ 1984 ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਉੱਤੇ ਵਾਪਰੀ ਮਹਾਂ ਦੁਖਾਂਤ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਰਮਨਾਕ ਘਾਪ ਦੇ ਟਹੀਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਨੂੰਨ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਾ ਕੇ ਸਜ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਦੁਆਇਣ ਦਾ ਅਮਲਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਅੰਜ਼ੀ, ਜਿੰਨੇ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਟੇ ਵਜੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮੀ ਸਹਾਯਤੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਧੇ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨਿਆਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਕਈ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਨ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਜ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਪਏ । ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਜੀਬ ਕਾਨੂੰਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਮਲਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਈਆਂ ।



Citation of Qaumi Seva Award presented to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by SGPC on the historic occasion of the inauguration of Sri Kartarpur Sahib corridor on 9th November, 2019

QAUMI SEVA AWARD

On the auspicious occasion of 550th Prakash Purab of Sachey Patshah Satguru (True Emperor True Teacher) Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj, the Sikh Qaum (community) has been blessed by Akal Purakh (Eternal Entity) and the great Guru Sahibs on this historic occasion; the daily prayers of all the sangat (Congregation), belonging to every nook and corner of the world for decades are being accepted in the Dargah of Akal Purakh (The Almighty God's Court). As a result and as a first step, a corridor connecting Dera Baba Nanak Sahib and the shrines of Guru Nanak Patshah's life at Kartarpur Sahib (Pakistan) has been opened for the sangat.

On the 550th birth anniversary of Satguru Sachey Patshah Ji, what greater divine gift could the Sikh Sangat have received than for a head of the country to become the Messiah and show political, administrative and diplomatic courage for fulfilling this wish of the Sikh community. It is only by the grace of the Guru that the joy of opening of this corridor of faith, belief and love for humanity has been bestowed upon the person, who himself is deeply in love with Sikhism and greatly devoted to the Guru's feet.

An example of this devotion is the unparalleled contribution of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in celebrating the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Maharaj, including the opening of Sri Kartarpur Sahib corridor and making Sultanpur Lodhi, the first karambhumi of Guru Sahib, a state-of-the-art smart city. There are a number of steps that have been taken to address the long-standing grievances of the Sikh Qaum. It is the heartfelt wish and prayer of the entire Sikh Qaum that Shri Narendra Modi will always be the object of love, respect and trust of the Sikh Qaum.

In the past, invisible obstacles were being put in the way of Kartarpur Sahib corridor by the same forces which had been talking in favour of this corridor only for the sake of show-off. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi boldly sidestepped the ongoing tensions between the two countries and many other unfortunate issues and preferred to fulfill the wish of the Sikh community to pay obeisance at the holy shrines. The entire Khalsa Panth is extremely grateful to him for the heartfelt gift he has given to the Sikh Qaum on this great occasion by initiating this Corridor.

Today, the Prime Minister of the country is present among us to express his love and respect for the Sikh Qaum and immense devotion to the great Gurus. As soon as he took over as the Prime Minister in 2014, he immediately took concrete decisions and started the process of bringing the

perpetrators of the extremely sad and shameful tragedy of 1984 to justice and punishing them. Many murderers, including politically-sponsored assassins, have been thrown behind bars and many more are coming under the purview of the law. In addition, the Modi government has provided relief of Rs 5 lakh to each victim family, numbering about three and a half thousand.

In the earlier regime, thousands of Sikh expatriates and their families were harassed by blacklisting them under the guise of Punjab's black days. Mr. Modi issued orders to slash the blacklists and also decided to issue Indian visas to the families of Sikh brethren, who were living as refugees in foreign countries due to government persecution during the black days in Punjab.

Keeping in view this historic occasion Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) pays tribute to Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi for the required initiatives taken from 2014 to date to keep the sacred nishan of Panth Maharaj unfurling forever and his constructive and warm friendly thought & attitude towards the Qaum, the supreme representative religious parliament of Khalsa Panth.

SGPC is feeling proud and happy while presenting the prestigious "Qaumi Seva Award" to the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, in recognition of his significant efforts made for the honour, dignity and respect of the Sikh Qaum.

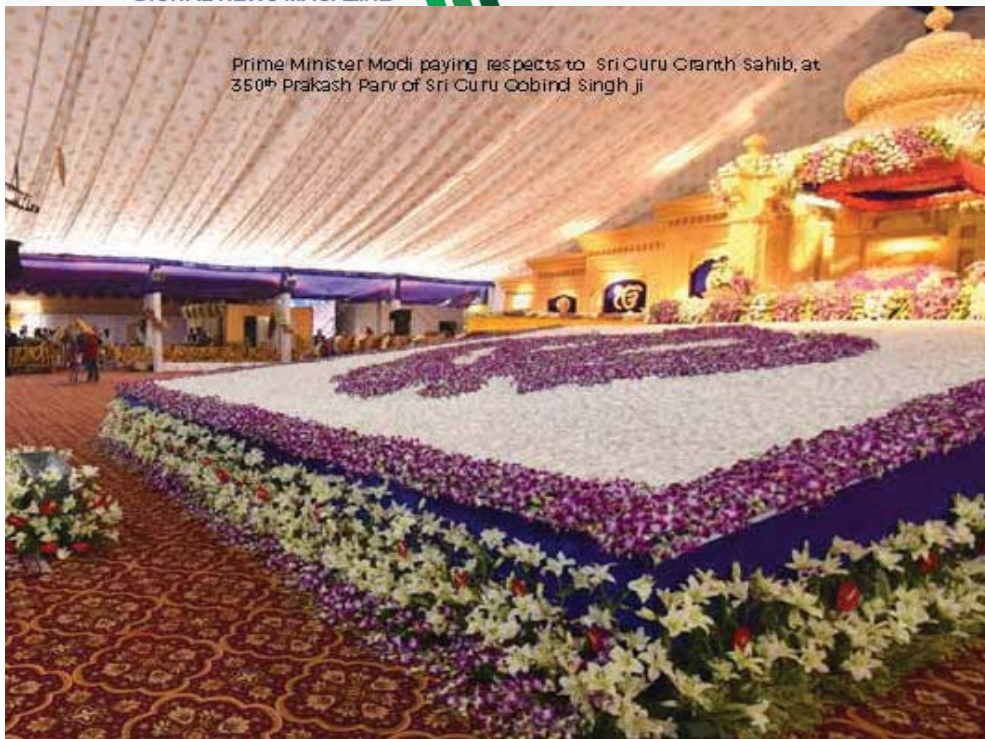
“

Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji illuminates the entire world with its pure teachings. Inspired by it, Sikhs globally have done pioneering service in several spheres. Their courage and kindness are remarkable. May Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji keep guiding humanity forever.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's special relationship with Sikhs has been seen in his personal gestures to the community and to the holy Gurus, as well as in his government's work empowering the Sikh community. He has paid great respect to the Sikh Gurus while he has always lauded the bravery, courage and spirit of enterprise of the Sikhs. With such a Prime Minister at the helm, no wonder that the government also has taken many institutional measures for the welfare of the Sikhs.



Prime Minister Modi paying respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib, at 350th Prakash Pauri of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

Whether it is about celebration of holy occasions such as Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji's 550th birth anniversary or Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji's 350th birth anniversary, whether it is about justice for victims of 1984 riots or about construction of Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor, Prime Minister Modi has taken personal interest and led the way in working for the Sikh community.

Let us look at the steps taken by the Modi government for the welfare of Sikhs.

“

Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar is a sacred place as it embodies peace and humanism.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Modi with members of the Sikh community



FCRA REGISTRATION FOR SRI DARBAR SAHIB, AMRITSAR

Sikhs are among the most globalised community, whose presence and influence spreads across continents. At the same time, they remain deeply connected to their roots and to India. Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar occupies a central place in the life of every Sikh. Giving back to the Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar is among the purest Sevas the Guru Sahibs can seek from any Sikh

For decades, there was no FCRA registration granted to Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar despite a strong demand by Sikhs globally. This was causing immense despair among the Sangat

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was determined to solve this problem. In September 2020, it was announced that FCRA registration has been granted to Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar

Now, the Sangat worldwide can deepen their connect with Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. They can partake in Seva sitting thousands of miles away

“

On the one hand, Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji showed the path of unity, brotherhood and harmony to society through social philosophy; on the other hand, he presented to the society an economic system which is based on truth, honesty and self-respect. He has taught us that the development achieved through truth and honesty, always leads to the path of progress and prosperity.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Modi at the langar, Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar

2

TAX-FREE LANGAR

The idea of Langar dates back to the times of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. It is a noble form of helping others. Today, many individuals and communities support Langar Seva across India

It was noted that there was GST on many Langar items. Prominent Gurudwara Committees, Sikh delegations, Sikh leaders and Sikhs from across the world had made fervent requests to undo that

PM Modi took a decision that benefitted many. By providing financial assistance under 'Seva Bhoj Yojana', the Government of India also waived GST on Langar items

Annual outlay of ₹325 crore was provided to reimburse central GST and IGST on food items used in Langars. This gesture will immensely benefit the Gurdwaras that serve free food to more than 1 crore people daily

This decision was hailed globally. After all, there must be no limitations to kindness, there must be no hurdles to compassionate gestures

3

SRI KARTARPUR SAHIB CORRIDOR

Sri Kartarpur Sahib Ji is among the holiest pilgrim places for Sikhs. For many decades, Sikhs from India could not go to Pakistan and offer prayers there. This was one wound from Partition that persisted endlessly. Pilgrims had to stand on the Indian side of the border and get a glimpse of Sri Kartarpur Sahib Ji through binoculars!

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi a historic step was taken that ensured Sikhs could easily pray at Sri Kartarpur Sahib Ji

The Modi government worked on the development of Kartarpur corridor from Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur, Punjab, and also allocated ₹120 crore for this project

State of the art infrastructure, including passenger terminal has been built to handle over 15,000 pilgrims per day

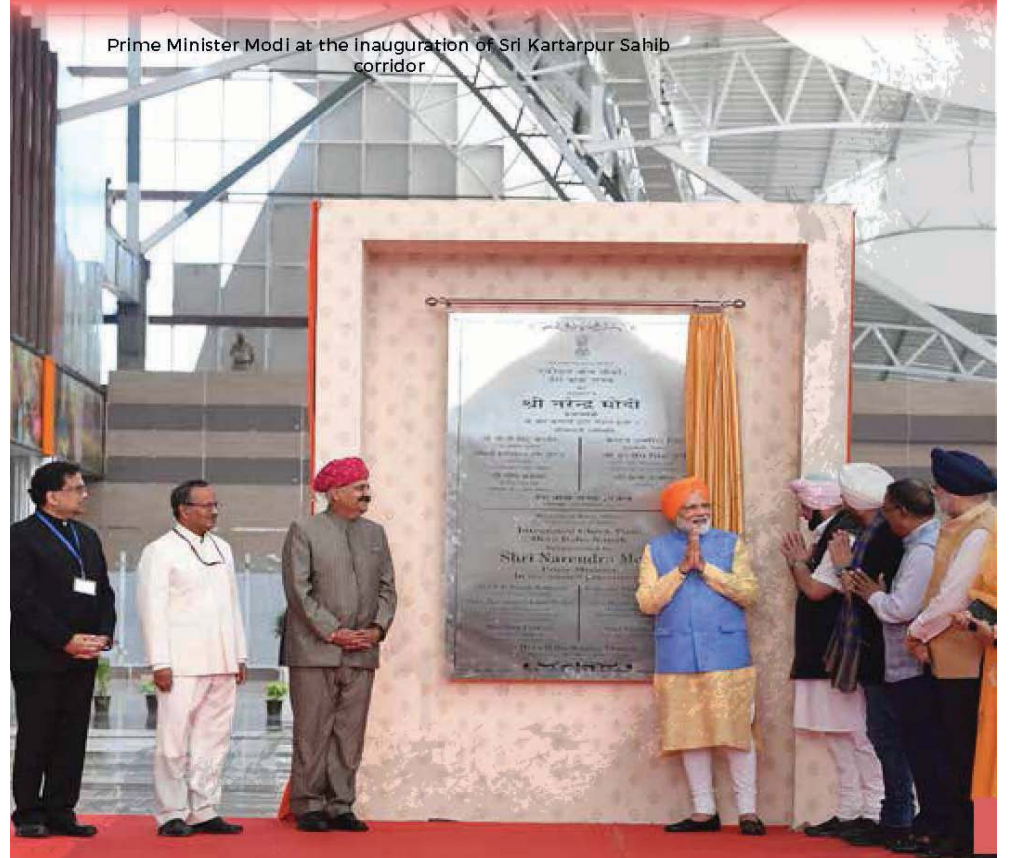
In November 2019, PM Modi personally went there and inaugurated the corridor as well as flagged off the first batch of pilgrims going to Sri Kartarpur Sahib Ji

“ Sri Kartarpur Sahib corridor will deepen the connect between lakhs of pilgrims and Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji.

It is my honour to have inaugurated the corridor.”

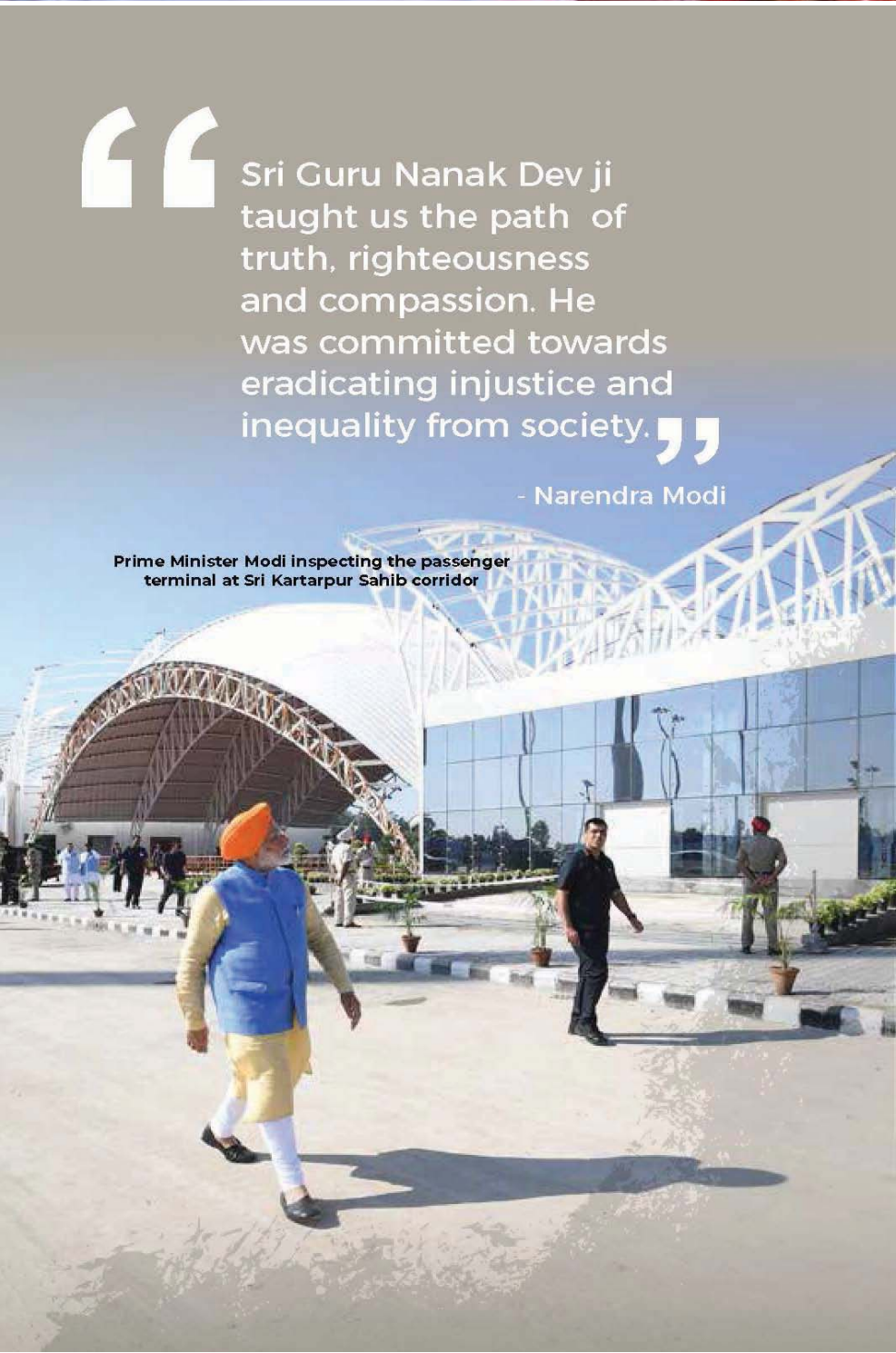
- Narendra Modi

Prime Minister Modi at the inauguration of Sri Kartarpur Sahib corridor



Prime Minister Modi paying obeisance at Sri Ber Sahib Gurdwara in Sultanpur Lodhi, Punjab before inauguration of Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor





“ Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji taught us the path of truth, righteousness and compassion. He was committed towards eradicating injustice and inequality from society.”

- Narendra Modi

4

SRI GURU NANAK DEV JI'S 550TH PRAKASH PARV

550th Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was marked with great enthusiasm in India. Indian Missions overseas also mobilised the Sikh diaspora to mark this momentous occasion in a grand manner

Various infrastructure upgradations and cultural programmes were held

Sultanpur Lodhi, where Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji spent much of his life, is being developed as a heritage city. This would draw Sikhs from all over the world. The Railway station there is also being modernised

Special train passing through places associated with Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji for five days a week is being initiated

The Finance Ministry released Gold and Silver coins to mark this auspicious occasion

National Book Trust released three texts- Guru Nanak Bani, Nanak Bani, and Sakhian Guru Nanak Dev to spread the message of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Punjabi

Furthermore, the Guru Nanak Bani was published and released in Urdu, Odia, Marathi, Hindi and Gujarati. Work is underway to publish the same in 15 other Indian languages

These steps will deepen the connect between youngsters and the noble tenets of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji



“

Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji teaches us service, compassion and furthers harmony. It lays out the path towards a just and equal society. It also teaches us never to bow to injustice.”

- Narendra Modi



5

PROMOTING TEACHINGS OF SRI GURU NANAK DEV JI

It is important that the noble thoughts of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji are spread far and wide. Following his noble path will certainly create a better planet

As a part of this endeavour, a National Institute of Inter-Faith Studies is being set up at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. This will further the message of inter-faith harmony. It will also give an impetus to scholarship related to Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

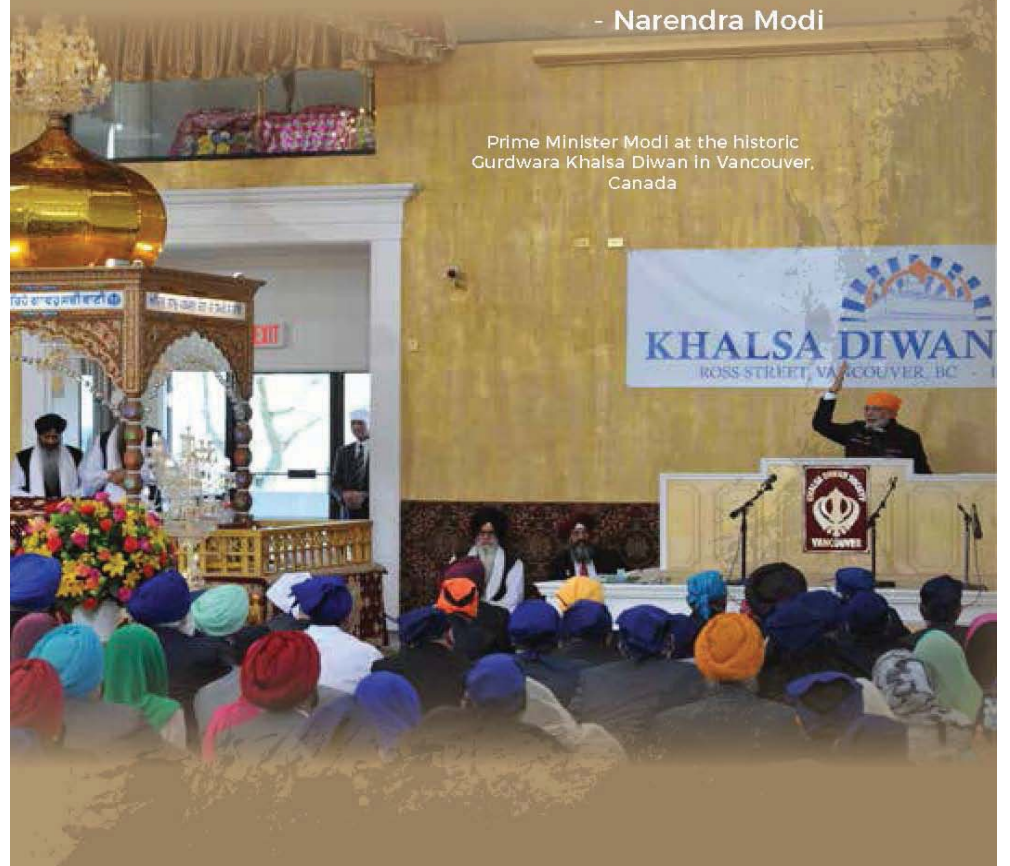
Likewise, a chair on Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji will be set up at a university in U.K.

There are discussions to set-up a similar chair in Canada. The Indian diaspora, especially their next generation will gain from this

“

From Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji to Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji, every Guru Sahib has made relentless efforts, made many sacrifices for the unity, protection and security of India. This tradition has been played by the Sikh Sathis with full vigour in the freedom struggle and the defence of independent India.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Modi at the historic Gurdwara Khalsa Diwan in Vancouver, Canada

6

550TH PRAKASH PARV ACROSS THE WORLD

550th Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji became a global occasion. There were wide range of programmes not only across the length and breadth of India but also in USA, Canada, Britain, Germany and other nations

An international seminar on the life and teachings of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was held by ICCR in New Delhi

In order to make Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings accessible to all, the Gurbani is being published in different Indian languages

On appeal of the Indian government, UNESCO is taking steps to publish his writings even in foreign languages

In the U.K., there were seminars, exhibitions, distribution of commemorative stamps, setting up of Chairs in various universities like the University of Wolverhampton and University of Birmingham

“

Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji's entire life was devoted to serving people and fighting for values of truth, justice and compassion.”

- Narendra Modi

Prime Minister Modi at the 350th birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Gurdwara Patna Sahib



Prime Minister Modi releasing commemorative coin for 550th Prakash Purnima of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

A grand concluding event took place at the iconic Town Hall of Birmingham. A special Speaker Series on Sikhism and Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was organised at the London School of Economics (LSE) with the South Asia Centre.

In USA, there were Shabad Kirtans, Gurbani Sangeets organised extensively

There was a seminar on the life of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji at Capitol Hill

Exhibition on Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Sikh artifacts was organized in association with Smithsonian Museum, Guru Angad Institute of Sikh Studies and Sikh Gurudwaras/organizations

The programmes in Canada were equally large-scale and diverse. A World Punjabi Conference was also organised

What was noteworthy was that youngsters took part in these programmes in large numbers



Prime Minister Modi addressing the gathering at the foundation stone laying ceremony for AIIMS in Bathinda, 25 November 2016



SRI GURU GOBIND SINGH JI'S 350TH PRAKASH PARV

India marked the 350th Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji with immense fervour in 2016-2017. Prime Minister Modi went to Patna, where Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji was born, to take part in the celebrations

A Commemorative coin of ₹350 to mark the occasion and commemorative postage stamps were also released as a tribute to Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

This occasion was also used to spruce up infrastructure relating to key Sikh holy places

Connectivity was improved between Sri Akal Takht, Sri Damdama Sahib, Sri Keshgarh Sahib, Sri Patna Sahib and Sri Hazur Sahib

A special flight was initiated for pilgrims from Amritsar to Nanded

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated 750 bed hospital in memory of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji at Jamnagar




The Indian Railways spent almost ₹50 crore to improve facilities for pilgrims and travellers in key places associated with Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

These steps went a long way in further popularising the ideals of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji and also deepening the bond between the vision of the Gurus and the Sangat





Prime Minister Modi addresses a gathering on the 350th Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

**Narendra Modi**
@narendramodi

We bow to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji on the day of his martyrdom. Inspired by the noble thoughts of the venerable Sikh Gurus, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji remained committed to harmony and peace. He was at the forefront of fighting injustice and never compromised on core values.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (Internal Security – I Division) NOTIFICATION New Delhi, the 24th October, 2020 F. No. 12014/13/2020-IS-VI — To commemorate the 400 th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji in a befitting manner, a High Level Committee (HLC) is constituted by the Government of India as under:	
Chairman	
1.	Shri Narendra Modi Prime Minister of India
Members	
2.	Shri Om Birla Speaker of Lok Sabha
3.	Dr. Manmohan Singh Former Prime Minister
4.	Shri Rajnath Singh Minister of Defence
5.	Shri Amit Shah Minister of Home Affairs
6.	Shri Nitin Jairam Gadkari Minister of Road Transport and Highways; and Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
7.	Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers
8.	Smt. Nirmla Sitharaman Minister of Finance; and Minister of Corporate Affairs



SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI’S 400TH PRAKASH PARV

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji is a symbol of compassion and bravery. He stood up for what he believed, no matter what the cost

His thoughts and ideals are at the centre of the Modi government’s vision of justice and development for all

The 400th Prakash Parv is being celebrated on grand scale from April 2020 to April 2021 in India and abroad

A 70-member committee under the supervision of PM Modi reviewing its implementation. This includes Chief Ministers of 11 states, MPs and eminent Sikh personalities



For many years, some people used to face problems when they came to India. With this step of removal of names from the blacklist, many families will now be able to apply for visas and OCI cards. They will be able to easily meet their relatives here in India and will also be able to do Ardaas by visiting places of the Gurus here.

- Narendra Modi



Sikh Delegation Involving the Sikh Council, Nishkam Sewak Jatha, U.K.’s leading Gurdwara representatives, Councillors, Community, Charity, Voluntary Group representatives and Business Leaders met with PM Modi in 2015 during his London visit during which the issue of removing people from the ‘blacklist’, among others was raised. Modi government promptly got this done

9

SLASHING THE BLACKLIST

For decades, some Sikhs who lived abroad used to find it difficult to get visas to travel home to India

This was because they were part of the 'blacklist' or the Central Adverse List which included Sikhs residing in the USA, UK, Canada and other countries

Some of these people were very old and wanted to visit their home and relatives in India but could not do so for many years

However, in a touching gesture, the Modi government removed 312 people from the blacklist of 314 people

Slashing the blacklist helps all these people meet their families, get Indian visas and OCI cards, and reconnect with their roots

They can also visit their holy places in India and seek blessings, something that they could not do for all these years

“Thousands of people were killed and burnt alive, families were destroyed and yet some are talking flippantly about it. Whatever happened in 1984 has shamed humanity. This chowkidar of yours had promised you justice. I had promised you that I will fight for your justice. Today, I can say with satisfaction that one offender has been awarded death sentence and the rest have been given life imprisonment, and those who are left will not be able to stay out for long.”

- Narendra Modi



10

JUSTICE AFTER 3 DECADES

A heinous blot in political violence was unleashed against Sikhs in 1984. However, shockingly, the perpetrators evaded justice for three decades due to their proximity to political elements while victims suffered

Modi government reversed this. It made the perpetrators of the violence suffer while the victims were compensated and given support

The government has worked on ensuring justice for Sikhs. It expanded ambit of probe into 1984 anti-Sikh riots cases by enabling Special Investigation Team (SIT) to reopen investigations in all the cases in which trial had been completed and the accused were discharged

Bringing Culprits to Justice

For almost 30 years, the perpetrators of 1984 anti-Sikh riots were protected by certain vested interests

Fresh probe was done through SIT constituted by Modi Government; it re-opened around 300 cases and filed charge sheets in many of them



Prime Minister Modi meeting 1984 riot victims

Convictions of political personalities who evaded justice happened within just 3 years of SIT formation. Before 2014, nobody thought such politicians would ever get convicted

SIT secured two convictions leading to capital punishment to Yashpal Singh and life imprisonment to Naresh Sehrawat

CBI in 2018 got former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar convicted and he was sentenced to life imprisonment and is currently in jail

Compensation Provided to Victims Pan-India

Additional compensation of ₹5 lakh each was given to the kin of 3,328 victims of 1984 riots cases in Delhi, Haryana, UP, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, MP, Maharashtra and Jammu and Kashmir.

In Delhi alone, additional compensation was given to 1,320 families worth ₹125.52 crore.

1,020 riot-hit families who migrated to Punjab from other states were given ₹2 lakh each as part of a rehabilitation scheme

“

Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji is not only the heritage of Sikhism and India, but also an inspiration for the entire humanity. Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji is an idea and the basis of life besides being a teacher.

”

- Narendra Modi

Prime Minister Modi with Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani at Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar



Prime Minister Modi interacting with Sikh community members after releasing coin commemorating 550th Prakash Utsav of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji



PROUD OF SIKH HERITAGE

PM Modi is immensely proud of the rich heritage of Sikhs and Punjab. He and his government always go out of the way to promote the beauty of this culture in India and abroad

In certain countries, Sikhs need exemptions to continue wearing turbans or beards. In such cases, Indian Missions have often issued letters to Indian Sikhs certifying that wearing of turban and growing beard are religious mandates for Sikhs. This helps in seeking exemption in certain countries where wearing turbans or growing beard is not allowed by some employers

Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani was taken on a visit to Sri Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar as part of official visit. This was not only a gesture of friendship but also significant given that there are many Sikhs who live in Afghanistan

The government is extending financial assistance for renovation and repair of some old Gurudwaras abroad

Further, the Modi government is leaving no stone unturned in promoting tourism to bring Sikh heritage live in front of people. For example, development of Anandpur Sahib – Fatehgarh Sahib – Chamkaur Sahib – Ferozpur – Amritsar – Khatkar Kalan – Kalanour – Patiala Heritage circuit under Swadesh Darshan scheme

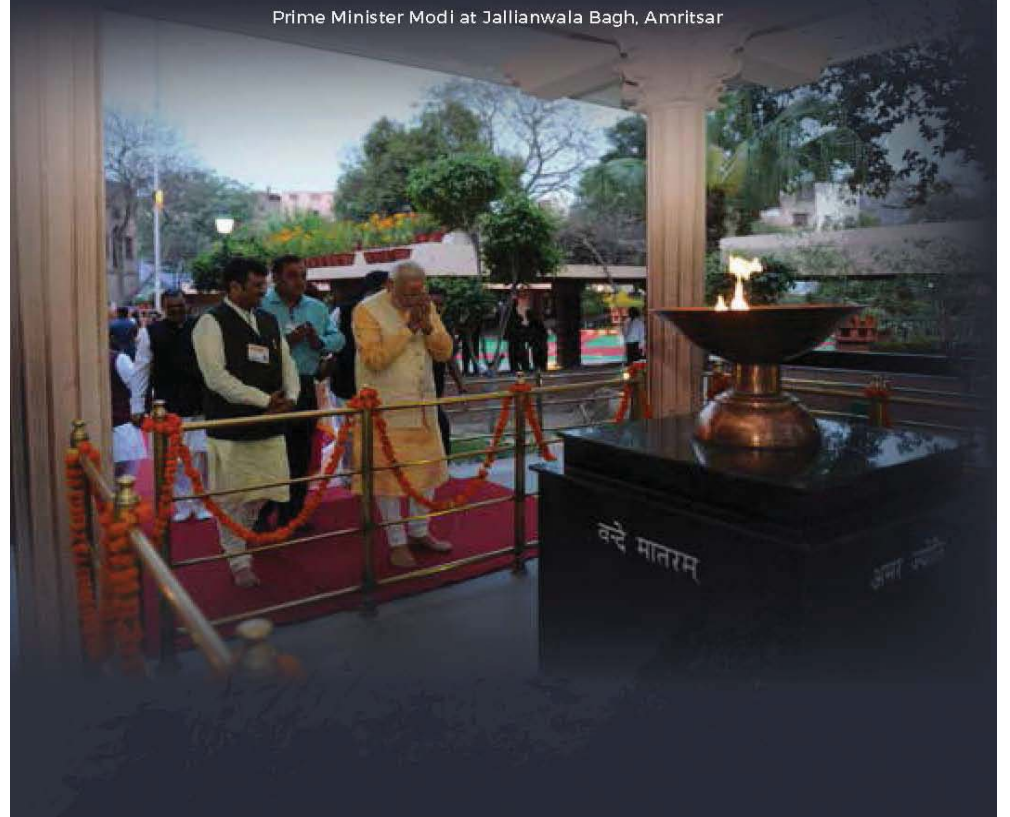
A ‘Multimedia Exhibition” organized on the occasion of the 550th Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Nanded, Maharashtra, that was highly appreciated

“

When we observe 100 years of the horrific Jallianwala Bagh massacre, India pays tributes to all those martyred on that fateful day. Their valour and sacrifice will never be forgotten. Their memory inspires us to work even harder to build an India they would be proud of.”

- Narendra Modi

Prime Minister Modi at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar



JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL

One of the most unforgettable national memories of India is the Jallianwala Bagh massacre

Punjab was one of the hubs of the freedom struggle and this incident especially shook the nation and brought everyone’s attention towards colonial brutality

To pay a fitting tribute to those who made great sacrifices, Modi government brought Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial (Amendment) Bill, 2019 to construct the national memorial

The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha in the centenary year of this event as a salute to the sacrifices of martyrs

It reforms the trust associated with the memorial and makes it apolitical

“

Sikh brothers and sisters will also get a huge benefit from the Citizenship Amendment Act. They will be able to get citizenship of India easily.”

- Narendra Modi



Sikhs from Afghanistan return to India, facilitated by Modi government



SHOULDER OF SUPPORT IN TIMES OF DISTRESS

No matter where Sikhs live in the world, the Modi government always looks out for their interests, safety and security

Many a time, when Sikhs were targeted in Afghanistan by terrorists, India strongly condemned such cowardly violence targeted at a minority community

However, the Modi government does not stop at condemnations but is committed to action. Under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), persecuted Sikhs from neighbouring countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan can seek refuge and citizenship in India

The government ensured the return of 230 families of Sikhs from Afghanistan between July and September 2020

Families of such people coming to India are being dealt sensitively and supportively by the Modi government. Special discounted air fare was arranged for the returnees for flights on the Kabul-Delhi-Kabul route during the COVID pandemic



Sikhs from Afghanistan return to India, facilitated by Modi government

All of these families will get full rights as Indian citizens thanks to CAA. But the needs do not end at just citizenship

Ensuring good quality education for the children of families of Sikhs from Afghanistan would help secure their future. The Modi government is also making scholarships available to their children to study in India

Monetary assistance is also being extended to Curdwaras in Kabul to ensure that even those who are staying back in Afghanistan are taken care of



Under the Indus Water Treaty, India has the rights on the waters of the Sutlej, Beas and Ravi. This right actually belongs to my farmer brothers. That water is not coming to your farm, but flows into the sea after passing through Pakistan. Neither does Pakistan use it, nor does it benefit India's farmers. I have created a task force to ensure that the water share as per the Indus Water Treaty, which otherwise was flowing into Pakistan, is utilized to the fullest. I am determined to ensure that these waters reach the farmers of Punjab, and Jammu and Kashmir.



- Narendra Modi



THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

India has asked Pakistan to ensure minority communities' security: MEA on Sikh girl's abduction

Published: 25th September 2020 12:02 AM

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

India lodges protest with Pakistan over abduction of Sikh girl

By: PTI | September 21, 2020 11:31 PM



SOLIDARITY WITH SIKHS OF PAKISTAN

People from the Sikh community living in Pakistan are also brave and devoted to the memory of the great Gurus

Despite facing threats, violence and oppression, they hold onto their ideals tenaciously and live with their head held high

PM Modi believes in strengthening the Sikhs living in Pakistan in various ways, including raising India's voice for their safety and security, as well as protecting the sacred places of Sikhism situated in Pakistan

Safety and Security of Sikhs in Pakistan

Bhai Taru Singh Ji is an inspirational figure. His devotion to the values that the Gurus preached and his ultimate sacrifice are deeply moving

The place of his martyrdom in Lahore, Gurudwara 'Shahidi Asthan', was sought to be changed. India objected to this. India has also raised its voice against the destruction of Sikh heritage sites and places of worship in Pakistan



Not only are Sikh sites in Pakistan a target of aggression, but people from the Sikh community are also often troubled in many ways

Abduction and forced marriage of minor Sikh girls, forcible conversions of Sikhs, targeted killings and violent attacks have regularly been heard of. India has raised such issues internationally

India has already passed the Citizenship Amendment Act to give citizenship to persecuted Sikhs from neighbouring countries

Protecting Sikh Heritage in Pakistan

Pakistan was pushed to accept a long pending demand of India and an agreement for the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor was signed in October 2019

PM Modi inaugurated Kartarpur Sahib Corridor in November 2019 on the occasion of the 550th Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, fulfilling the dreams of lakhs of Sikhs from India who were keen on visiting Kartarpur Sahib

Several Sikh shrines and pilgrimage sites in Pakistan have been included in the bilateral protocol signed with Pakistan in 1974. This ensures that their upkeep is monitored

Despite COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, Modi government has facilitated visit of Sikh Jatha to Gurudwara Nankana Sahib on the occasion of 551st birth anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

“

With the removal of article 370, Sikh families in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh will now get the same rights that they get in the rest of India. Till now there were thousands of families who were deprived of many rights.

”

- Narendra Modi

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DDC polls: West Pakistan refugees outside booths in Jammu say justice done after 70 years of struggle

Synopsis

With the abrogation of Article 370, several communities like West Pakistan refugees, Valmikis and Gorkhas are now eligible to vote in local elections, purchase land and apply for jobs in Jammu and Kashmir, and besides these, they can also contest elections.

15

RIGHTS ENSURED FOR SIKHS IN J&K

There were many long pending demands of the Sikh community such as equal rights in Jammu and Kashmir

Sikhs who came into Jammu and Kashmir as refugees after Partition were denied many rights due to Article 370. Although everyone knew they were denied their rights, none was willing to change the situation

Prime Minister Modi has taken personal interest in ensuring that many such longstanding issues are resolved

Modi government's bold and decisive action against Article 370 has given equal rights to the Sikh minority in Jammu and Kashmir

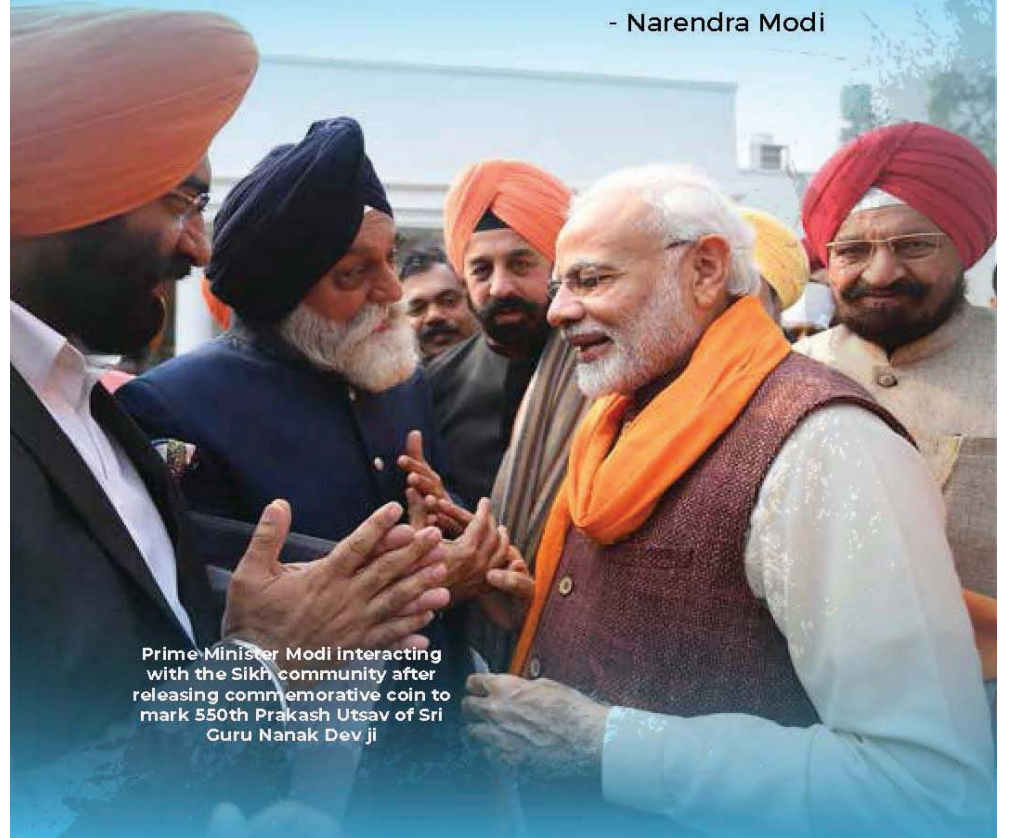
1.16 lakh Sikh refugees who migrated from Pakistan (after partition) to J&K will now get domicile and voting rights just like every other citizen of India, something that was denied to them for decades

Earlier, Sikhs of Jammu and Kashmir who married Sikhs outside used to fear that they would lose property rights due to the anomalies arising out of the discriminatory regime of Article 370. Now, they no longer need to fear this and can strengthen their relationship with Sikhs in other parts of the country

“

A proud Punjab makes India proud. There is no one in India who would not have eaten wheat that was grown in Punjab. This land is a land of givers, and has stood up firmly whenever the need arose to serve India. Punjab has left no opportunity to showcase successful examples for the country whenever needed.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Modi interacting with the Sikh community after releasing commemorative coin to mark 550th Prakash Utsav of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji

16

REFORMS AND SGPC ELECTIONS

Sikh philosophy inspires people to the highest ideals. It is obvious that only those who are in line with Sikh Rehat Maryada must be allowed to become electors in SGPC elections

There was a call to ensure that this is enshrined in the law. Modi government responded to this call promptly

Sikh Gurdwaras (Amendment) Act 2016 was amended by the government, addressing the demand regarding participation in SGPC elections

In line with the Sikh Rehat Maryada, people who trim or shave their beard (kesha), smoke or consume alcohol cannot be considered electors in SGPC elections

Recently, the Modi government appointed Justice (Retd) S S Saron as Chief Commissioner of Gurudwara Elections to pave the way for elections to the new SGPC

“

You will find a number of stories of sacrifices made by the Sikhs. They have sacrificed their lives for the protection of our nation. They kept shedding their blood to protect India, and post-freedom they have toiled to ensure that no Indian remains hungry.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Modi during a meeting with a Sikh community delegation in San Jose, USA September 2015

17

CONNECTIVITY AND CONNECTION

PM Modi has a strong connection with the Sikh community. This is seen in many of his actions, including the way he has taken steps to boost connectivity as well as strengthen connections with Sikh diaspora across the world

Modi government has enabled Air India's direct flight from Amritsar to London and from Amritsar to Delhi to Birmingham. Direct flights from Amritsar to Toronto have also been enabled

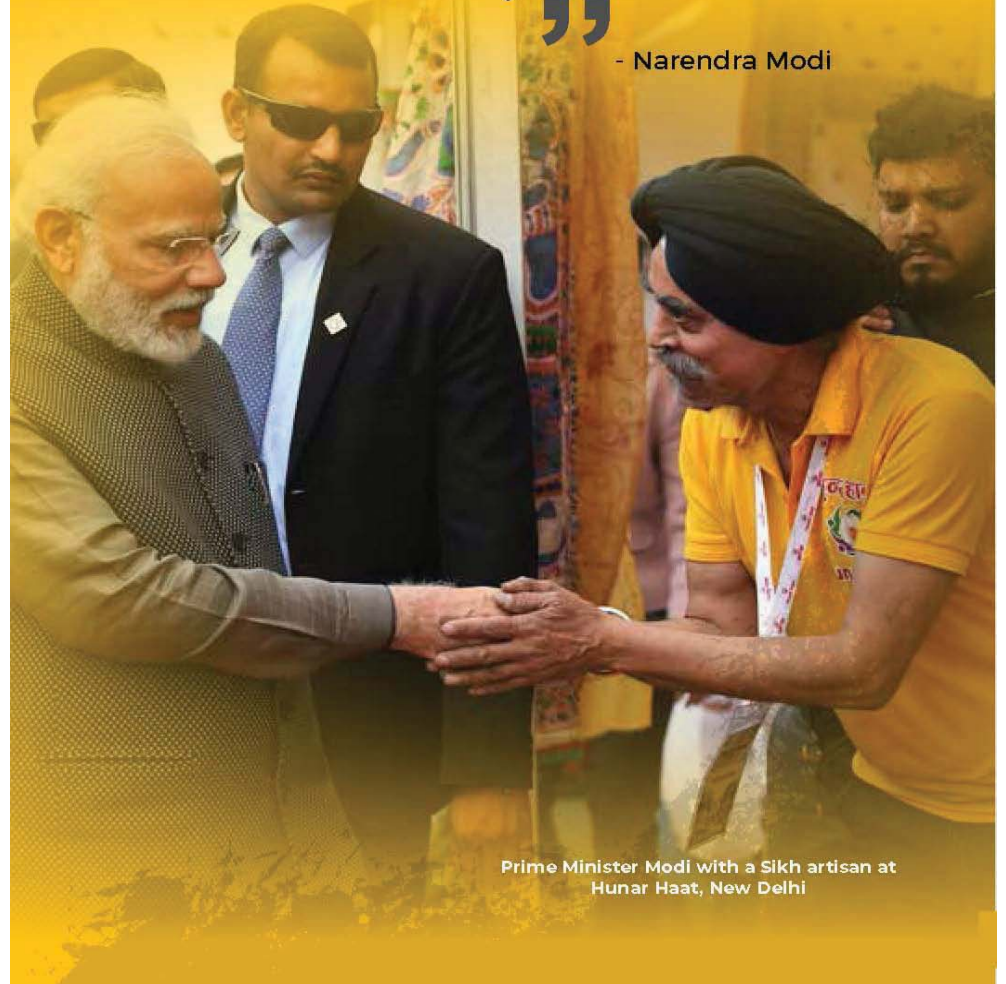
It is well known that these routes benefit Sikh diaspora a lot and will help them meet their near and dear ones at home more frequently and faster

Further, internal connectivity has also been enhanced for Sikh pilgrims. Air connectivity between Amritsar and Nanded via special flight has been initiated. Recently, during the COVID pandemic, Sikhs stuck in Nanded were brought back home during Corona pandemic by arranging transport

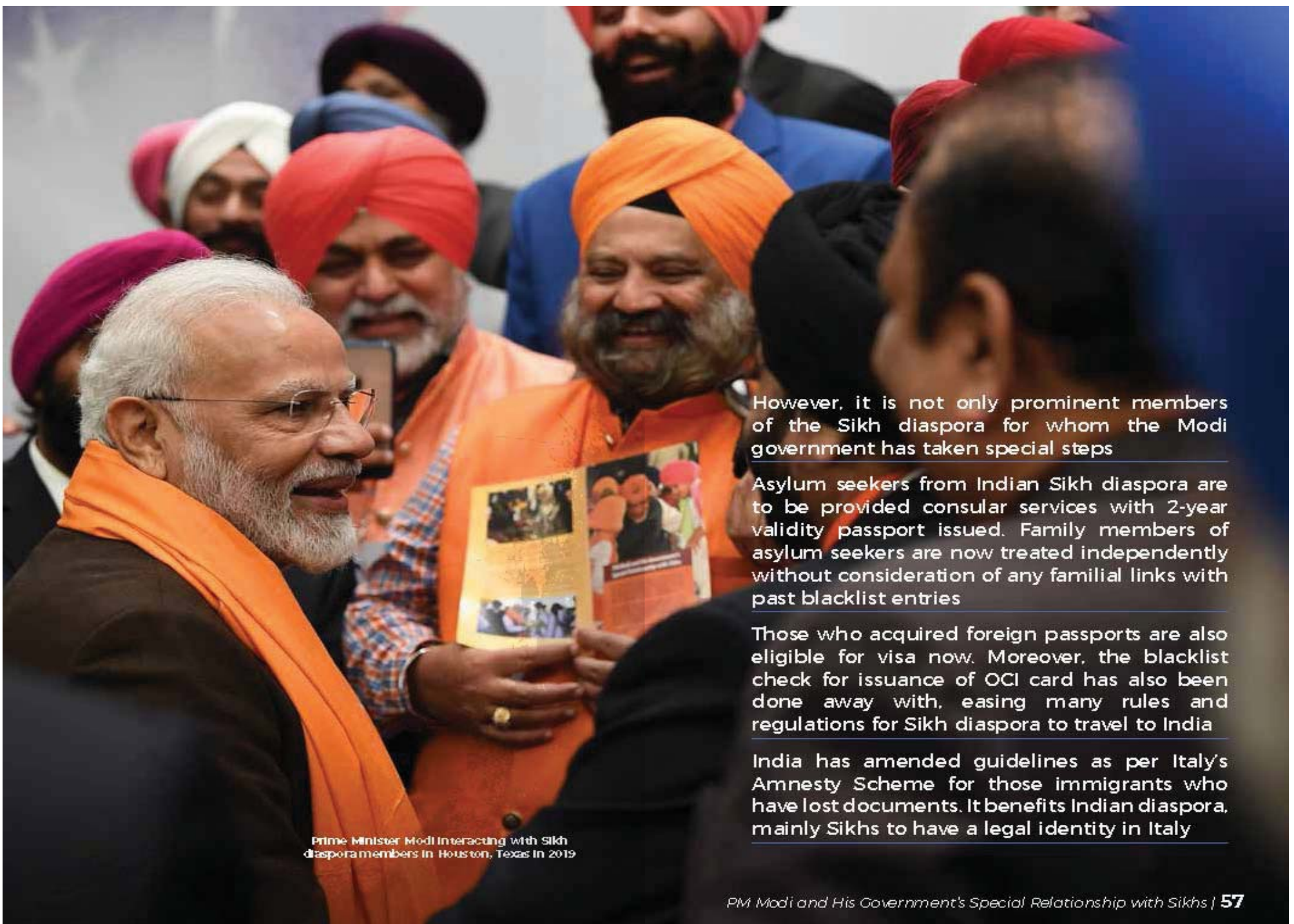
Prominent Sikh diaspora members have been awarded at Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas and invited to Independence Day. A unique NRI Sikh Sammelan was also held in Amritsar in 2019

“Let us take a pledge on this important and sacred platform that we will make Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji's words a part of our lives. We will make every effort to create harmony within the society.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Modi with a Sikh artisan at Hunar Haat, New Delhi



Prime Minister Modi interacting with Sikh diaspora members in Houston, Texas in 2019

However, it is not only prominent members of the Sikh diaspora for whom the Modi government has taken special steps

Asylum seekers from Indian Sikh diaspora are to be provided consular services with 2-year validity passport issued. Family members of asylum seekers are now treated independently without consideration of any familial links with past blacklist entries

Those who acquired foreign passports are also eligible for visa now. Moreover, the blacklist check for issuance of OCI card has also been done away with, easing many rules and regulations for Sikh diaspora to travel to India

India has amended guidelines as per Italy's Amnesty Scheme for those immigrants who have lost documents. It benefits Indian diaspora, mainly Sikhs to have a legal identity in Italy

18

EMPOWERING SIKH YOUTH

Before 2014, just 18 lakh students from the Sikh community had been given scholarships. But the Modi government ensured that 31 lakh Sikh students were given pre/postmatric and merit-cum-means scholarships

Sikh youth form a significant share of 10 lakh beneficiaries under self-reliance schemes such as Hunar Haat, Garib Nawaz Employment Scheme, Seekho Aur Kamao, Nai Manzil, gaining employment opportunities

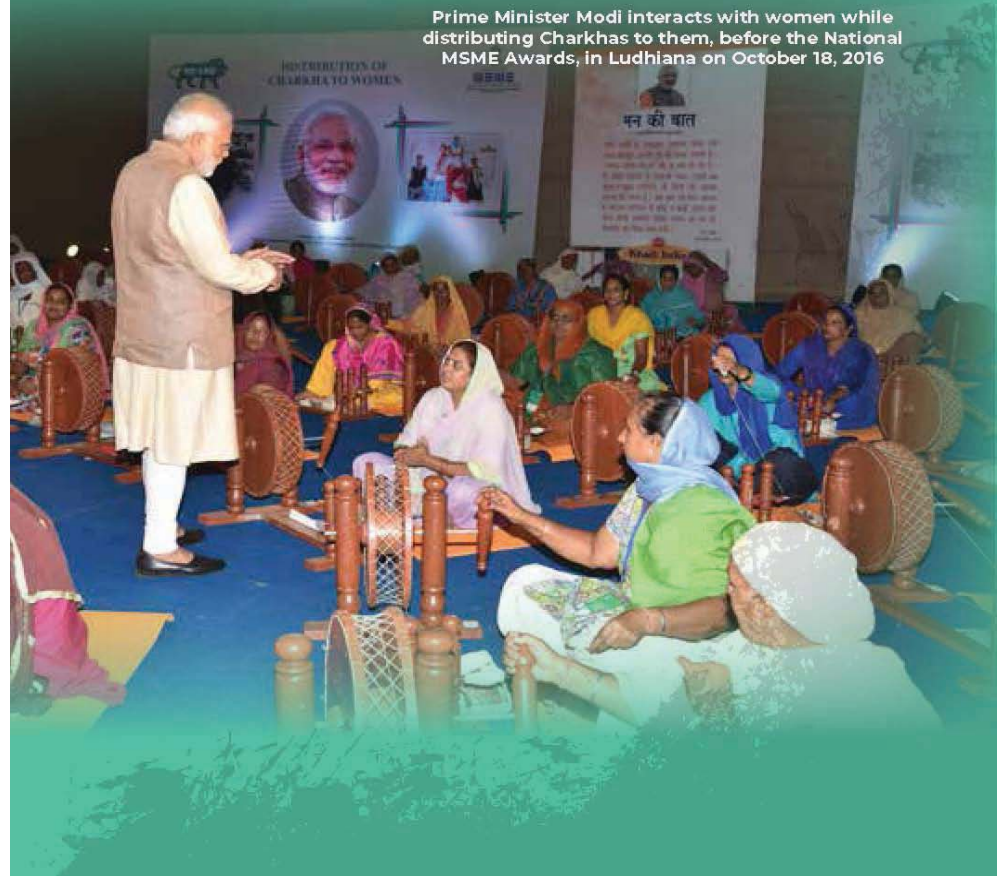
More than 24% of the below social infrastructure built under Prime Minister Jan Vikas Karyakram for backward areas developed in Sikh concentrated areas.

1,517 New School Buildings	6 Navodaya Vidyalayas	1,734 Health Projects
646 Hostels	403 Multipurpose Community Centre	6 Hospitals
163 Residential Schools	598 Market Sheds	8 Hunar Hub
8,820 Smart Class Rooms	5,299 Toilet and Water Facilities	14 Various Sports Facilities
32 Colleges	143 Common Service Centres	6,014 Anganwadi Centres
94 ITIs	22 Working Women Hostels	23,233 Additional Class Rooms
13 Polytechnics		

“

We need to work on manufacturing and skill development & ensure cities like Ludhiana grow. I want Ludhiana to become the pride of India. We will focus on Zero Defect manufacturing so that 'Made in India' brand shines.”

- Narendra Modi



Prime Minister Modi interacts with women while distributing Charkhas to them, before the National MSME Awards, in Ludhiana on October 18, 2016

19

POWERING PUNJAB'S PROGRESS

Punjab has a special place in PM Modi's heart, having had a long relationship with the state's politics and people. He has seen closely the challenges faced by the people of the state and has always accorded top priority to the development of the state. PM Modi has worked with attention to detail to address various long-standing issues of the state

Strengthening Irrigation with Shahpurkandi Dam

Punjab is the golden state of Indian agriculture. To boost its irrigation potential and to support Punjab's farmers, Modi government approved implementation of Shahpurkandi Dam Project on river Ravi with central assistance of ₹485.38 crore for irrigation component over five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23

On completion of the project, an Irrigation Potential of 5,000 ha in Punjab would be created, which will directly benefit the hardworking farmers of the state

Prime Minister Modi accepting a kirpan at the foundation stone laying ceremony for AIIMS in Bathinda, 25 November 2016



This is also generating numerous jobs for skilled and semi-skilled workers

The dam will also help with the development of tourism, recreational facilities and fisheries, and contribute to overall socio-economic development of area

Healthy Punjab, Happy Punjab

Taking healthcare to the people, especially the poorest of the poor, has been a matter of priority for the Modi government

Over 45 lakh families of Punjab are covered by Ayushman Bharat, which enables them to avail top quality health services for free at 785 hospitals, including private hospitals

PM Modi's vision for healthcare is that everyone should be able to avail superior and specialised healthcare services affordably

In line with PM Modi's vision, in 2016, the foundation stone for AIIMS at Bathinda was laid

Within 3 years, in a boost to medical care and medical education, AIIMS Bathinda was set up and operationalized in December 2019

Satellite Centre of PGI Chandigarh at Firozpur was also approved at a cost of ₹450 crore, to be operational by 2022, building a new hub for medical education and research that benefits people

Helping Punjab recover from COVID induced disruption

From MSMEs to street vendors, from farmers to the poor, the economic disruption of COVID pandemic has impacted many. However, the Modi government has been working to prevent the disruption from becoming distress

To revitalise Punjab's industrious MSMEs, ₹2,529 crore of loans were sanctioned under Emergency Credit Loan Guarantee Scheme to over 1.15 lakh MSMEs as part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

Punjab's street vendors are getting loans to restart their business. Loans were sanctioned to 6,521 street vendors under PM-SVANidhi scheme

The farmers of Punjab have been receiving direct income support under PM-KISAN scheme as part of PM Modi's attempts to provide an income safety net to farmers. 23.73 lakh farmers of Punjab received financial support under PM Garib Kalyan Package

12.24 lakh beneficiary families registered with PM Ujjwala Yojana received 24 lakh free gas cylinders during April-August 2020

Supplementing rural poor with income for work, 2.4 crore mandays of work generated under MNREGA, with 66.08% of mandays generated for SC workers

Infrastructure development for Punjab

Punjab, being among the economically better off states, needs its infrastructure to be well maintained. Over 115 projects were sanctioned to improve the conditions of National Highways between 2014-2018

To boost connectivity even further, Modi government approved construction of 18 road projects comprising 1,000 kilometre of roads in Punjab in September 2020, including projects related to these road stretches:

- Delhi - Amritsar - Katra four lane expressway
- Amritsar-Ghoman
- Ghoman-Tanda
- Amritsar - Ramdas
- Hoshiarpur - Una
- Hoshiarpur - Phagwara
- Sunam - Moonak
- Moonak - Uklana
- Tanda - Hoshiarpur

Punjab is the land of rivers and hence, using waterways is a crucial way of boosting the state's economy. Four inter-state National Waterways go through Punjab

- National Waterways 17 and 98 (Himachal Pradesh and Punjab)
- National Waterway 45 (Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan)
- National Waterway 84 (Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab)

Taking air connectivity in Punjab to the common man, four airports in Bathinda, Ludhiana, Pathankot and Adampur have been connected by the UDAN Scheme

Diversifying and strengthening Punjab's industrial footprint

Work on Ludhiana Mega Food Park is ongoing while a Mega Food Park at Phagwara was inaugurated in November 2020

Amritsar-Jamnagar, Chandigarh-Rajpura-Patiala-Sangrur-Bhatinda inter-corridor roads, Sangrur-Bathinda feeder roads, Bathinda-Mandi Dabwali Economic Corridors are proposed under Bharatmala

Modi government is setting up North India's first compressed biogas plant in Lehragaga of Sangrur. It is to be commissioned in March 2021

4 CNG stations approved for Punjab commissioned in October 2020 will help provide clean fuel for transport and cooking and reduce pollution

Tractor and harvester manufacturing hubs of Mohali, Jalandhar and Sirhind will get major boost with farm law amendments freeing the agriculture sector for investments

India's first Technology and Innovation Support Centre is set up in the state of Punjab by the Modi government



Prime Minister Modi addressing the people at Anandpur Sahib Gurdwara

Reviving Punjab's textile manufacturing legacy

Separate scheme has been launched to boost production in knitting and knitwear clusters with Ludhiana chosen as one of them

3 Integrated Textile Parks launched in Punjab with parks in Nawanshahr and Ludhiana operational, while park in Barnala is to start operations soon

National Technical Textiles Mission with four-year implementation period from 2020-21 to 2023-24 at an estimated outlay of ₹1,480 crore will benefit Ludhiana, given the city's vibrant textile industry

Phagwara and Ludhiana emerged as the pride of India as PPE Kit manufacturing hubs with support from the Modi Government, creating a new export-oriented industry within six months

Anti-dumping duty on PTA abolished to benefit the textile sector is going to benefit Punjab's textile industry massively

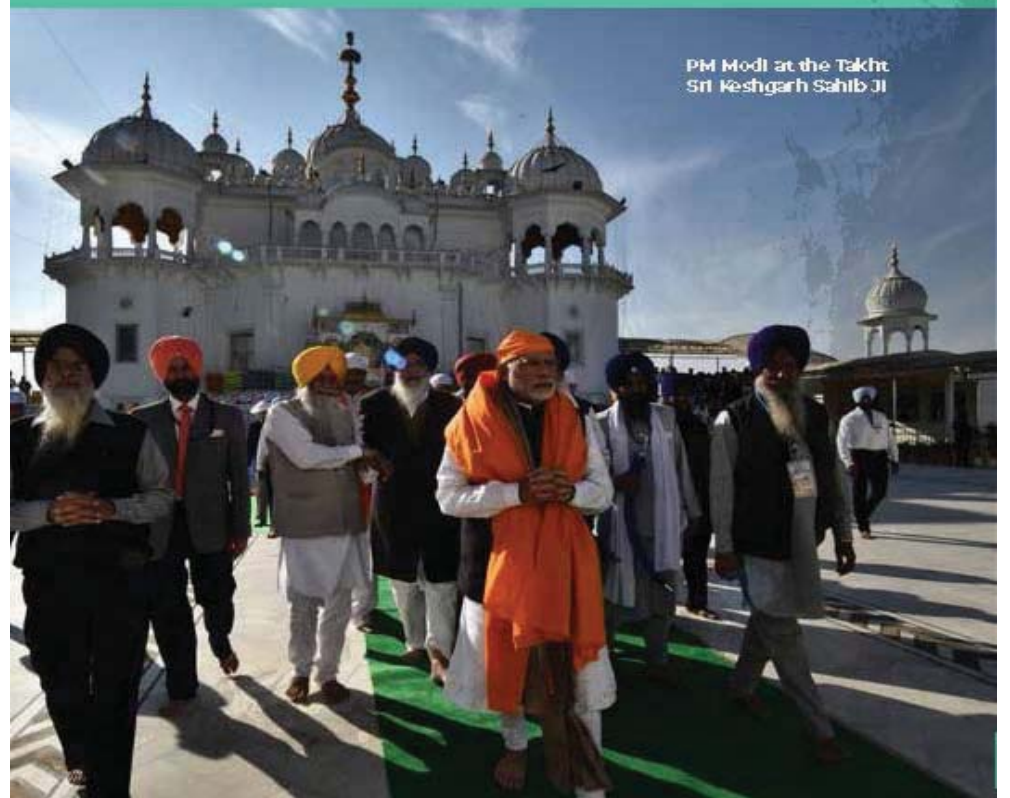
Working for welfare of Punjab's women

41.5 lakh beneficiaries under the Supplementary Nutrition and preschool education under ICDS scheme

3.25 lakh women receive more than ₹144 crore under PM Matru Vandana Yojana

3.66 lakh girls benefited under Scheme for Adolescent Girls up to March 2020

More than 23.75 lakh women borrowers benefited in Punjab till January 2020 out of the 40 lakh beneficiaries of MUDRA Scheme



PM Modi at the Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib Ji

Ensuring Ease of Living for All Punjabis

22.29 lakh households in Punjab provided with tap water connections under Jal Jeevan Mission

3.84 lakh household toilets built under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) to ensure over 99.8% coverage

More than 73 lakh Jan Dhan Accounts opened in Punjab

Over a lakh houses sanctioned in urban and rural areas through Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

8,243 km of road works completed under PM Gramin Sadak Yojana to connect rural areas of Punjab

Piped city gas distribution network for Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Bathinda to be operational soon; Mansa, Ferozepur, Faridkot, Muktsar, Hoshiarpur, Mohali and Gurdaspur awarded



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Prime Minister Modi being presented with Siropa and Kirpan at Bhai Ganga Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Tehran, in 2016



Prime Minister Modi honoured by the Sikh community in Houston during the 'Howdy Mod!' event, September 21, 2019



STANDING GUARD THROUGH THICK AND THIN

Narendra Modi being honoured by the Sikh community with a siropa at a community event during his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat.



Narendra Modi accepting a memento from Sikh community representatives as Chief Minister of Gujarat during a Gujarati New Year function



Narendra Modi on a visit to a gurdwara for a community event during his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat

A group of Sikhs in New York, USA met Prime Minister Modi and expressed solidarity with him, September 28, 2014



Prime Minister Modi being honoured at the Gurdwara Khalsa Diwan at Ross Street in Vancouver, Canada April 16, 2015

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Priyanka Chopra

Priyanka Chopra

is excited as The White Tiger makers send her name for awards season in Best Supporting Actress category

Actor Priyanka Chopra is excited about her upcoming Netflix movie, The White Tiger. On Wednesday, she took to Instagram to share pictures and videos of the screener package she had received for the movie. Also attached with the screener was a 'For Your Consideration' leaflet, asking awards academies, associations and other organisations to consider the film and its team for the upcoming awards season. Priyanka's name was submitted in the Best Actress in a Supporting Role while her co-star Rajkummar Rao's name was submitted in Best Actor in a Supporting Role category. The film's lead, Adarsh Gourav, was championed for

the Best Actor in a Leading Role category while Divine and others were asked to be considered in the Best Original Song category for their song, Jungle Mantra. Director Ramin Bahrani and multiple others' names have also been submitted in different categories. Sharing the leaflet on Instagram Stories, Priyanka added by fire effects and wrote, "And then I saw this!!" Adarsh, too, reposted her video on his Instagram page. Rajkummar, meanwhile, shared a picture of a large billboard, bearing the film's poster in New York City. The White Tiger opened to largely positive reviews last week. It released in select theatres in the US and will start streaming on Netflix on January 22. Based on the Man Booker Prize-winning novel by the same name, it is being called among the few frontrunners this awards season. Priyanka also celebrated the success of her other film, We Can Be Heroes, on Instagram. The film has once again gained the number 1 spot on Netflix. Directed by Robert Rodriguez, the film starred Priyanka in a negative role.

Bhumi Pednekar shares pic with Rajkummar Rao as Sumi and Shardul from Badhaai Do

Actors Bhumi Pednekar and Rajkummar Rao have been shooting for their film, Badhaai Do. Bhumi shared a picture with her co-star from the film's set while both were in character. Sharing the picture, she wrote: "Do mastane chale zindagi banane, Bande sayane aur naam ke deewane #SumiAurShardul #BadhaaiDo @rajkummar_rao (two happy souls are out to live their lives, both clever and somewhat romantic)." The picture showed Rajkummar sporting a thick moustache, while Bhumi looked pretty in a pink kurta. Both were lying on their backs and Bhumi covered herself with a light blanket. Some of their industry colleagues reacted to the picture. Dia

Mirza wrote "Cuties! Dono," followed by a heart emoji, while Jackky Bhagnani wrote "can't wait". Another Instagram user said: "Two powerhouse actor bahut maza ayega to see @rajkummar_rao n @bhumipednekar together... Jaldi shoot karo aur release karo." Bhumi also shared a picture of a massive set being prepared. Earlier this month, the team of Badhaai Do began shooting for their film.



Hina Khan completes 12 years as an actor: 'It has been overwhelming'

Twelve years back, Hina Khan started her career with television, with her very first show turning out to be so popular that she became a household name. And then came visiting the Cannes film festival in 2019 with her film Lines, and she made her Bollywood debut with Hacked last year. As she hits this milestone in her career, an elated Khan says, "The journey has been amazing! When I look back at where I started off from to where I am now, all that I have experienced has been very overwhelming and I am grateful to God for giving me some of the best experiences in life through these 12

years." What makes it more special is her bagging the Best Actress award at Montgomery International Film Festival Lines. The 33-year-old gushes, "The feeling is amazing, overwhelming and I am filled with gratitude for such a prestigious honour. Our work getting recognised on an International level is definitely a huge achievement for our entire team and we are all ecstatic about what we have achieved." Since her film career is clearly panning out well, are more Bollywood projects on the horizon in the near future, we ask. Kha says, "Hacked was my first commercial film in 2020, and the entire experience of working on

the project was amazing! I do have another film coming up soon, but I will only be able to reveal details about it later." The actor adds that she isn't going to differentiate between projects on the basis of whether it is a masala entertainer or content driven and it's only content that would matter. "Content is the king for me so whatever I choose to take upon - an artsy film or a full-fledged commercial film - the content has to be appealing and interesting. Hence, taking a step forward into films with Lines was one of the best decisions I took."



Homeownership Still More Affordable than Renting AND Will we have a buyer's housing market in 2021?



Nick Verma
CEO, SRS, Broker

It's not likely we'll see a buyer's housing market in 2021, at least according to experts. Most major players are projecting home prices to rise, and while strong construction could put more inventory on the market, it likely won't be enough to tip the scales in buyers' favors.

With that said, it does seem like buyers will see some relief at some point. For example, home prices are still expected to rise in 2021, but at a smaller pace than we saw in 2020. Freddie Mac projects prices to rise only 2.6% — much better than 2020's 5.5% clip.

Low mortgage rates will also help offset those rising prices. Though rates probably won't hit the bargain-basement numbers seen this year, most economists project they'll stay in the high-2% to low-3% range. Fannie Mae

actually predicts a 2.8% rate across the entire year.

The biggest problem will be the low levels of inventory met by ever-increasing demand. Though work-from-home opportunities have certainly contributed to this (and will continue to do so), there's also rising demand from younger buyers to consider.

Homeownership is a better deal than renting, despite rapidly escalating home prices over the last few months, according to a new study released by ATTOM Data Solutions, a real estate research firm. Owning a median-priced three-bedroom home is more affordable than renting a three-bedroom property.

Record low mortgage rates may be helping to offset some of the steeper home prices lately. Median home prices have risen more than average rents in

83% of the counties tracked, the study notes. "Home prices are rising faster than rents and wages in a majority of the country," says Todd Teta, chief product officer with ATTOM Data Solutions. "Yet, homeownership is still more affordable, as amazingly low mortgage rates that dropped below 3% are helping to keep the cost of rising home prices in check. It's starting to see that kind of trend. But it shows how both the cost of renting has been relatively high compared to the cost of ownership and how declining interest rates are having a notable impact on the housing market and homeownership."

That said, Teta adds that the coming year is uncertain with the COVID-19 outbreak still raging on and hampering economic growth. "But right now, owning a home still appears to be a financially sound choice for those who can afford it."

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