

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India
June 22, 2023

President Biden. Welcome, Mr. Prime Minister. Welcome back to the White House.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

President Biden. I've long believed that the relationship between the United States and India is one of the—will be one of the defining relationships of the 21st century. Two proud nations—two proud nations—whose love of freedom secured our independence, bound by the same words in our Constitution, the first three words: "We the People." The enduring ties and shared values between our people and the shared responsibility as global leaders to tackle the great issues of our time together.

I'm honored to be the first to have you here in 15 years. The United States is honoring and hosting an official visit for the Republic of India. Prime Minister Modi, welcome back to the White House.

Audience members. Modi! Modi! Modi!

President Biden. We've spent a lot of time—we've spent a lot of time together, going back to when I was Vice President and you had just become Prime Minister.

And since I've become President, we've continued a relationship built on mutual trust, candor, and respect. The challenges and opportunities facing the world in this century require that India and the United States work and lead together. And we are.

With your partnership, we've invigorated and elevated the Quad between the United States, India, Australia, and Japan to advance our vision of a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific. Decades from now—decades from now—people will look back and say the Quad bent the arc of history toward "global good," as the Prime Minister describes it.

Together, India and the United States are working closely on everything from ending poverty and expanding access to health care, to addressing climate change, to tackling food and energy insecurity stoked by Russia's unprovoked war in Ukraine.

We've made critical and emerging technologies the pillar of our next-generation partnership to ensure that these technologies promote and protect our values, remain open, accessible, and trusted and secure. All this matters for America, for India, and for the world.

We face an inflection point, one of those moments that only come around every several generations, when so much is changing technologically, politically, socially, and environmentally that the decisions we make today are going to determine our future for decades to come.

And as democracies, we can better tap into the full talent of all of our people and attract investments as true and trusted partners, as leading nations, with our greatest export being the power of our example.

Equity under the law, freedom of expression, religious pluralism, and diversity of our people—these core principles have endured and evolved, even as they have faced challenges throughout each of our nations' histories, and will fuel our strength, depth, and future.

And they form a special bond among our nations, forged by the special bond among our people, based on values that are universal: a duty to family and elders; treating all people with respect and dignity; a premium on education and creativity; self-discipline, hard work,

entrepreneurship; faith and service to community; courage and resilience; and tolerance and opportunity for all.

I've seen this dynamism in my visits to India. I see it in Indian American diaspora that reflects every part of American life and remains a bridge between our nations and only grows stronger with each generation.

We see it with record numbers of Indian Americans serving in the United States Congress. We see it here at the White House, where proud Americans with Indian heritage serve our country every day, including our Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris.

The granddaughter—the proud granddaughter of an Indian civil servant, daughter of an Indian student turned American scientist who came to the United States when she was only 19 years old to pursue her dream of curing cancer. A family like so many of ours in our Nation that speaks to the thousand stories of determination, courage, and hope.

Stories that define the relationship and the limitless possibilities between the United States and India: two great nations, two great friends, two great powers that can define the course of the 21st century.

Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for your partnership. And I'll turn it over to you.

Audience members. Modi! Modi! Modi!

[At this point, Prime Minister spoke in Hindi, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.]

Prime Minister Modi. President Biden, First Lady Dr. Jill Biden, distinguished guests, friends from the Indian American community filled with energy and excitement: A very good morning to all of you.

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to President Biden for his warm welcome and his farsighted speech.

[Prime Minister Modi spoke in English as follows.]

Thank you, President Biden, for your friendship.

[Prime Minister Modi spoke in Hindi, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.]

Friends, this grand welcome ceremony at the White House today is an honor and pride for 1.4 billion people of India. This is also an honor for more than 4 million people of Indian origin living in the U.S. For this honor, I express my heartfelt gratitude to President Biden and Dr. Jill Biden.

Friends, about three decades ago, I came on a visit to America as a common man. At that time, I had seen the White House from outside. After becoming the Prime Minister, I have come here many times. But today, for the first time, the doors of the White House have been opened for the Indian American community in such large numbers.

The people of the Indian community are enhancing India's glory in the U.S. through their talent, hard work, and dedication. You are the real strength of our relationship.

I thank President Biden and Dr. Jill Biden for the honor you've been given today. I think I can't thank him enough for this.

The societies and institutions of both India and the U.S. are based on democratic values. The constitutions of both countries begin with the following three words: "We the People," as

President Biden just mentioned. Both of our countries take pride in their diversity. Both of us believe in the fundamental principle of: "in the interest of all, for the welfare of all."

In the post-COVID era, the world order is taking a new shape. In this time period, the friendship between India and the U.S. will be instrumental in enhancing the strength of the whole world. The two countries are committed to work together for the global good and for global peace, stability, and prosperity. Our strong strategic partnership is a clear proof of the power of democracy.

Friends, in a short while from now, President Biden and I will discuss India-U.S. relations and various regional and global issues. I'm sure that, as always, our conversation today will be very positive and useful.

This afternoon I will also have an opportunity to address the U.S. Congress for a second time. I am deeply grateful for this honor.

I wish for, and the 1.4 billion people of India wish with me, for India's Tricolor and America's Stars and Stripes to always keep flying higher and higher.

President Biden, Dr. Jill Biden, once again, I thank you for your kind invitation, for your warm welcome and hospitality, also on behalf of 1.4 billion people of India.

Jai hind. God bless America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:16 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Modi was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : India, Prime Minister Modi.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Harris, Kamala D.; Modi, Narendra.

Subjects: Artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies; Climate change; Food shortages due to conflict in Ukraine, mitigation efforts; Health care costs and affordability; India, Prime Minister; India, relations with U.S; Quadrilateral Security Dialogue; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Vice President.

DCPD Number: DCPD202300561.