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We The People

75

Years of U.S. - India Relations

By U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum

PREFACE

The relationship between the United States and India, two of the world's largest democracies, is often symbolized as a partnership between two kindred spirits and is called the most important strategic partnership of the 21st century. A partnership strengthened by a shared goal to make a difference in its citizens' lives and the rest of humanity. But what makes this partnership truly special is an unwavering commitment to democratic values and a mutual affinity that the people share for each other.

To celebrate 75 years of India's independence, we are proud to launch 'We The People,' an intimate portrait celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of this strong friendship. The sacrosanctity of these three simple words, enshrined in the U.S. constitution first, which later became the reference document for India's founders, reflects the will of their people.

This book chronicles the journey of the partnership, from the earliest inspiration of democratic ideals Indian thinkers took from American shores to how the alliance evolved from episodic estrangement to now a period of deep engagement, featuring high-level state visits to bilateral agreements. The catalyst to this partnership cannot be found in the corridors of Raisina Hill or Capitol Hill but in the warmth that people share for each other.

'We The People' presents poignant and iconic images that capture the long-standing history between the two nations. This heart-warming book hopes to be memories of nostalgia further deepening our bright future together.

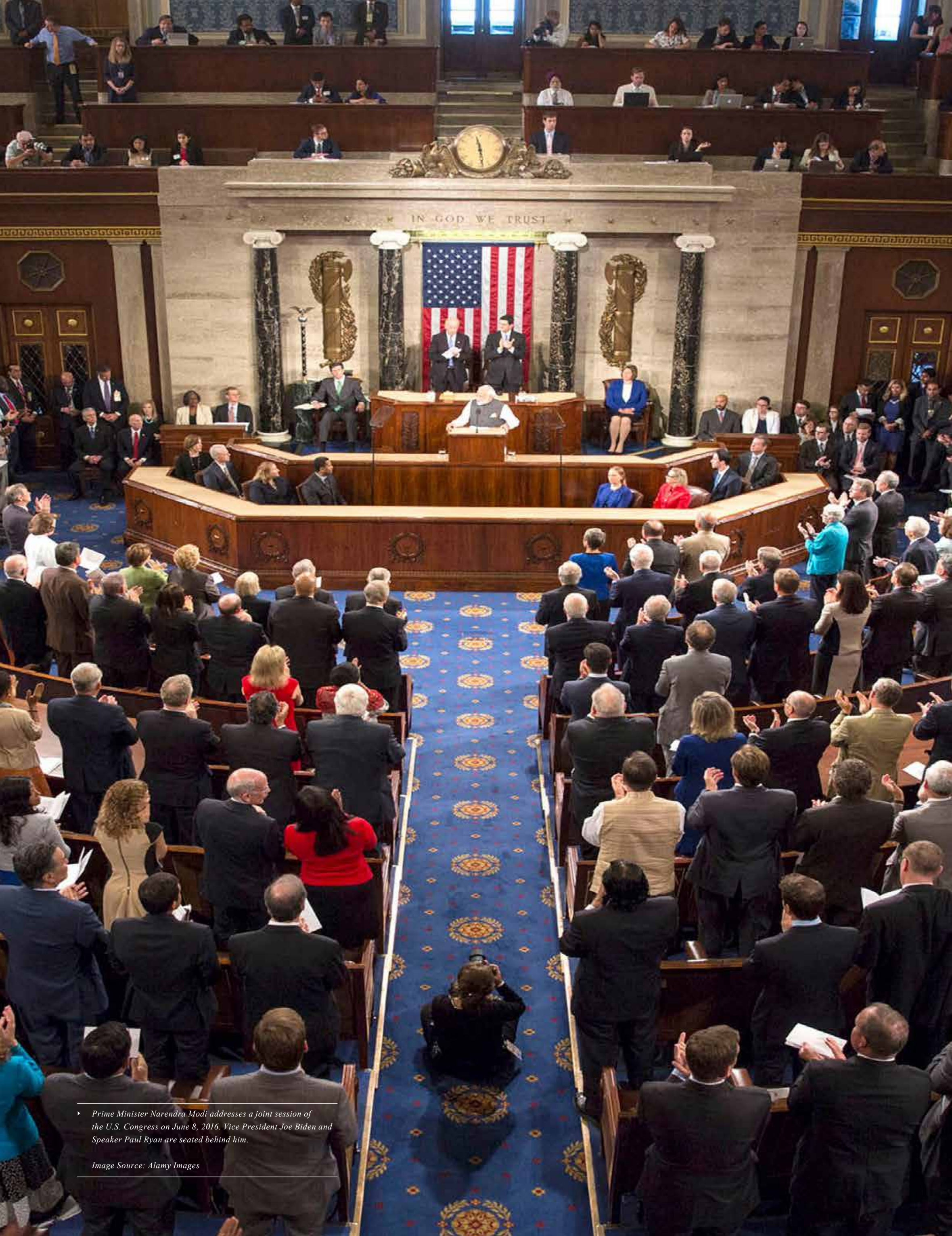
*“More than fifteen years ago,
Prime Minister of India,
Atal Bihari Vajpayee stood here and
gave a call to step out of the ‘shadow
of hesitation’ of the past.*

*The pages of our friendship since
then tell a remarkable story.*

*Today, our relationship has
overcome the hesitations of history.”*

***Prime Minister Narendra Modi
U.S. Congress***

June 8, 2016



► Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a joint session of the U.S. Congress on June 8, 2016. Vice President Joe Biden and Speaker Paul Ryan are seated behind him.

Image Source: Alamy Images

*“Unique combination of strengths:
democracy, demography and demand which
will help us transform India”*

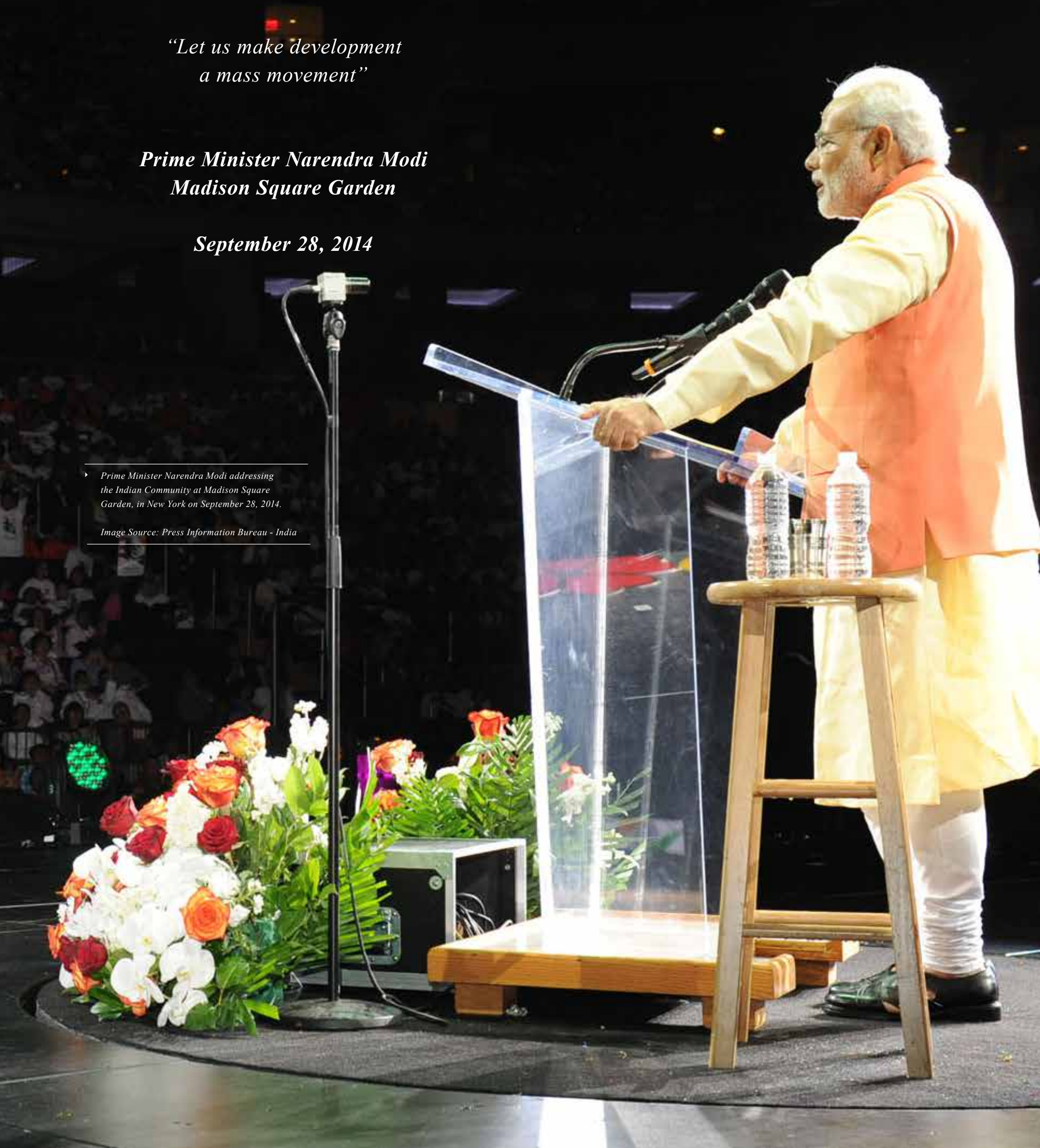
*“Let us make development
a mass movement”*

***Prime Minister Narendra Modi
Madison Square Garden***

September 28, 2014

▶ *Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing
the Indian Community at Madison Square
Garden, in New York on September 28, 2014.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



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DR. S. JAISHANKAR

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

*“Whether it is global security, technology, economics or education,
the India - U.S. relationship is hugely consequential. And its
transformation is driven by a deep people to people connect.”*

July 2022

ANTONY J. BLINKEN

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE

“The United States’ strong and growing partnership with India across every field of human endeavor demonstrates that, working together, democracies can deliver on building the world we envision for the future - a world that addresses the climate and global health crises and ensures a secure, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific.”

July 2022

TARANJIT SINGH SANDHU

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA, 2020 - PRESENT

“As someone who has worked on the India-U.S. relationship over the last 25 years, I must say that it has been an incredibly fascinating journey. When I look back, many pictures fill my mind, some of which have been historic, special and dear to my heart, such as the electrifying first diaspora event of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Madison Square Garden in 2014 ; President Obama’s visit as the Chief Guest of the Republic Day in 2015; Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Energy/ Tech visit to the Bay Area in 2015; Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s address to the U.S. Congress in 2016; and most recently, the first-ever Quad Leaders’ Summit in Washington D.C. hosted by President Biden. When I look ahead, I see an ocean of possibilities to build together a better and brighter future, for us and for the world!”

July 2022

01

DEMOCRACY, DIPLOMACY AND DIALOGUE

The United States and India today share a robust strategic partnership with synergy in technology, trade, defense and security, diaspora connections, and democratic values. But when and where did this relationship begin? This chapter showcases the historical linkages between India and the United States, even as the countries celebrate a forward-looking 21st century partnership.

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH

U.S. AMBASSADOR TO INDIA, 1961-1963

“This is a sympathetic relationship which is based on a wide area of appreciation of Indian culture, Indian history, Indian art, Indian architecture, and the companion relationship which is made between countries that have broadly similar political structures, parliamentary government. And this is far more important than the superficial difficulties that arise between governments.”

March 1982

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

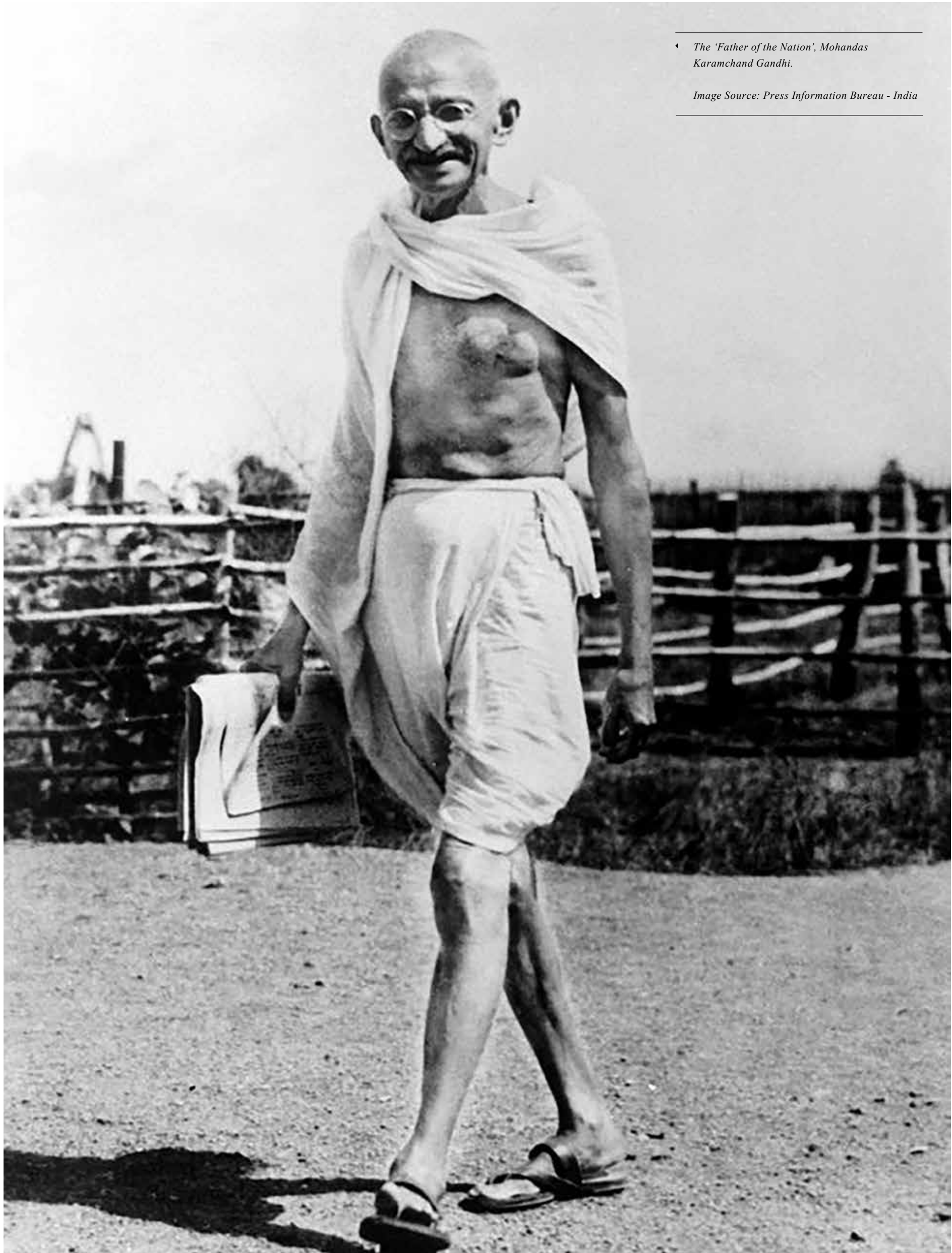
LEADING STRATEGIC AFFAIRS THINKER

“If the U.S. remains the world’s predominant power, and China is second, India will be the swing power. It will therefore have three options: partnering with the U.S. and other pluralistic, secular and democratic countries; joining hands with China at the risk of betraying the values of its Constitution and freedom struggle; and remaining both politically and ideologically non-aligned, even if against its own ideals. Many Indians worry about an unequal partnership with the U.S. because they do not appreciate the full potential of India as a knowledge power. In the years ahead, the U.S. will require a reservoir of skilled manpower, and India will require green energy and agricultural technology to grow faster.”

February 2011

DIPLOMACY BEGAN EARLY

Kolkata, then Calcutta, has its place in Indian history as the country's former capital. The city also has its place in U.S.-India relations, as the earliest place in the history of American diplomacy. It was not only home to the first American Consulate in India but also one of the oldest American Consulates in the world. According to the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, shortly after American independence and long before Indian independence, "President George Washington, on November 19, 1792, nominated Benjamin Joy of Newbury Port as the first American Consul to Kolkata." On recommendations from then-Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson (later the third President of the United States) and with approval of the Senate, President Washington commissioned Joy to the office on November 21, 1792.



◀ *The 'Father of the Nation', Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

A 20TH CENTURY BEGINNING AND 21ST CENTURY PARTNERSHIP

We The People

The robust relationship between India and the United States rests on three strong pillars:

- 1. A strategic partnership based on trade ties, security cooperation, and burgeoning economic investments.**
- 2. Shared democratic values reflecting the will of the people in the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy.**
- 3. The diaspora connection with strong people-to-people ties between Washington and New Delhi.**

This chapter examines how influential Indian and American leaders looked to each other for inspiration. While Mahatma Gandhi was inspired by the American independence movement, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was influenced by Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent struggle for Indian independence and parlayed his principles of "Ahimsa" in attaining civil rights for disenfranchised African Americans.

Democracy Inspired

Both India and the United States see their stories as exceptional, a triumph against colonial forces. A firm belief in pluralism and the power of the people is an ethos that runs across both nations. If individuals find affinity in common values, so do nations, which consider each other kindred spirits based on sacrosanct values over economic transactions.

At first glance, Indian and American independence are as separated by time, just as they are by geographic distance. India follows a Constitutional Parliamentary system that it inherited from the British, one that is very different from the American Presidential system of democracy. The American struggle for independence looked nothing like the nationalist uprisings in European colonies, especially India.

In America, it was the British settlers who entered into a bitter scuffle with government authorities, and in colonies like India, the natives rose unanimously against the tyranny of their colonial masters. The echoes of the American uprising are often penetrating the writings and speeches of nationalists in India; none more so than Mahatma Gandhi, who, in his clarion call to resist British domination, drew inspiration from the American revolution.

In this chapter, we witness how great Indian thinkers such as B.R. Ambedkar, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and Rabindranath Tagore were influenced by the United States and how Indian thinkers influenced seminal American figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the work of Satyananda Stokes - the American who took part in India's struggle for independence.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
One infinite—pure & holy—beyond thought
beyond qualities— I bow down to thee



Swami Vivekananda

► Photo of Swami Vivekananda in Chicago in 1893 with the handwritten words "one infinite pure and holy—beyond thought beyond qualities I bow down to thee"

Image Source: Alamy Images

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda's iconic speech in Chicago in 1893 at the World's Parliament of Religions introduced Hinduism to American lands. His speech was a clarion call for peace, tolerance, and eschewing fanaticism.

Speech delivered by Swami Vivekananda on September 11, 1893

"Sisters and Brothers of America,

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world, I thank you in the name of the mother of religions, and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects. My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honor of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration.

I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: 'As the different streams having their sources in different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.'

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: "Whosoever comes to me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me." Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilization and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honor of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal."

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore made five successive visits to the United States of America (1912-1913, 1916-1917, 1920-1921, 1929 and 1930). The Indian poet and author was deeply influenced by the U.S. and pushed for closer ties between the eastern and western branches of the Indo-European family. Though fond of the U.S., Tagore was seen as a “pacifist” opposed to war. Despite his early role as a patriot and nationalist in 1905-1907, Tagore had become disillusioned with nationalism by the end of that decade, and many of his lectures focused on the theme of opposing U.S. involvement in the World War.

*“Where the mind is
without fear and
the head is held high*

Where knowledge is free

*Where the world has not been
broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls*

*Where words come out from
the depth of truth...”*



▾ The Indian poet and philosopher
Rabindranath Tagore who composed
the National Anthem of India.

Image Source: Alamy Images



“We must stand on our own feet and fight as best as we can for our rights. So carry on your agitation and organize your forces. Power and prestige will come to you through struggle”

^ Dr. B.R. Ambedkar presiding over joint Columbia Bicentennial - American Alumni banquet at National Sports Club of India, New Delhi, October 30, 1954. With Dr. Richard P. McKeon (U. of Chicago), Dr. G.S. Mahajani (Delhi U.), and Mrs. Humayan Kabir

Image Source: U.S.Embassy, India

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (B.R. Ambedkar) is best known as the architect of the Indian Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar spent his professional career as an advocate for the upliftment of the formerly “untouchable” Dalit caste and its universal suffrage. He was awarded a Ph.D. in Economics from Columbia University in 1927 and received an honorary degree in 1952. Ambedkar was the first member of the Dalit community to earn a Ph.D. from the United States and was a politically prominent member of the community. Apart from championing the rights of the Dalit community, Ambedkar’s insights and acumen played a central part in framing the Indian Constitution, inspired by the American constitution. Ambedkar was deeply influenced by American thinkers like John Dewey during his time at Columbia University.

MAHATMA GANDHI

Even though Mahatma Gandhi never visited the U.S., he was touched by America without touching its shores. Gandhi's iconic Dandi March in the early 1930s, to protest against the unfair salt tax imposed by the British, took inspiration from the historic Boston Tea Party. The Dandi March, like the Boston Tea Party, raised a sense of awareness among the British authorities.

"Even as America won its independence through suffering, valour and sacrifice, so shall India, in God's good time achieve her freedom by suffering, sacrifice and non-violence."

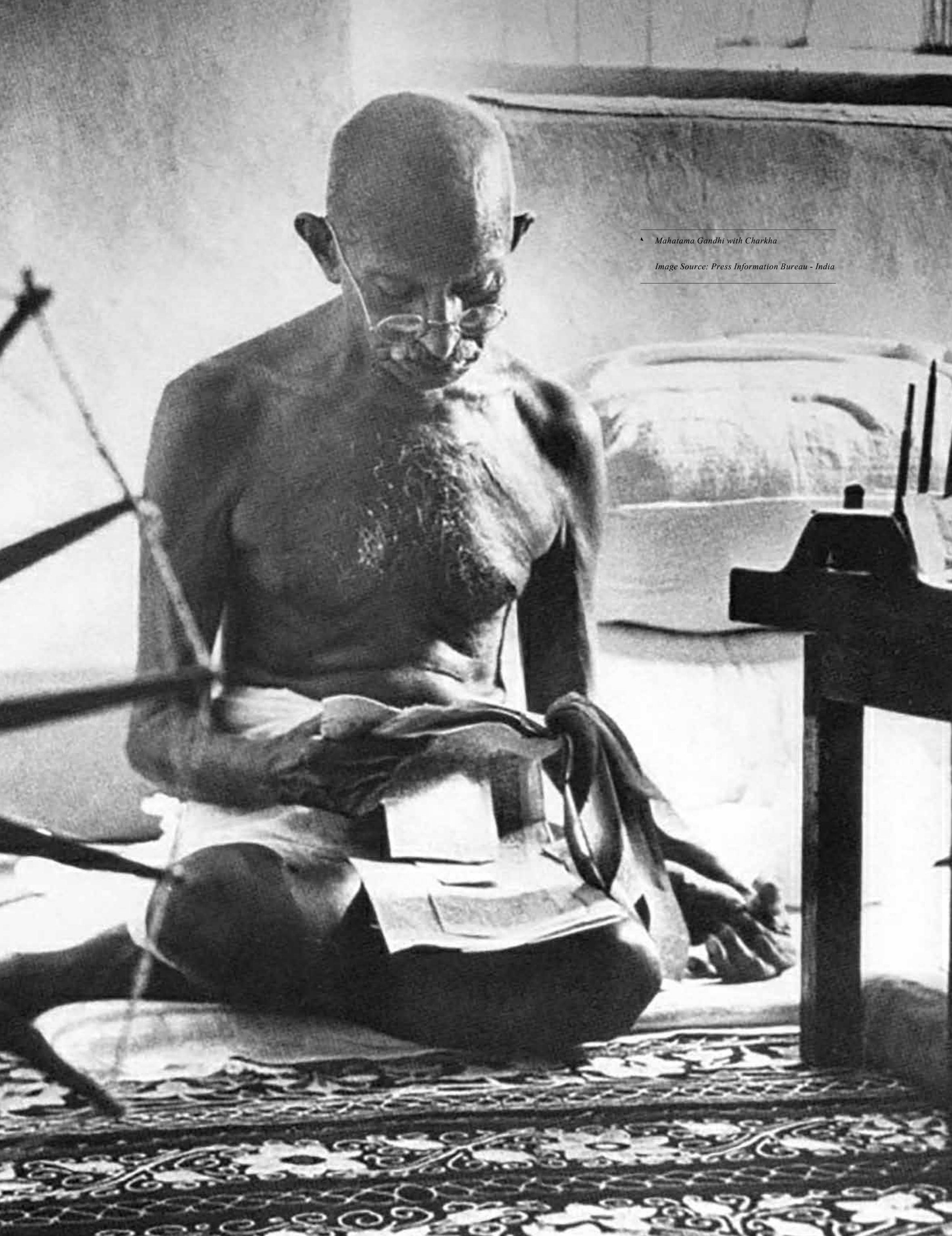
Mahatma Gandhi

January 1932

"Few non-Americans have had such a great impact on American life. His work as a freedom fighter and social reformer in India was closely followed in the U.S. Thinkers such as W.E.B. Du Bois and E. Franklin Frazier wrote about him, and several influential African-Americans visited him to seek advice, including Howard Thurman, later a mentor to Martin Luther King, Jr. Gandhi appealed to American radicals because of his anti-colonialism, and to American Christians because of his simple life and message of brotherhood. The Chicago-based magazine the Christian Century repeatedly proposed Gandhi's name for a Nobel Peace Prize, though it failed to persuade the Anglophilic Norwegians to award him the honor."

Ramachandra Guha

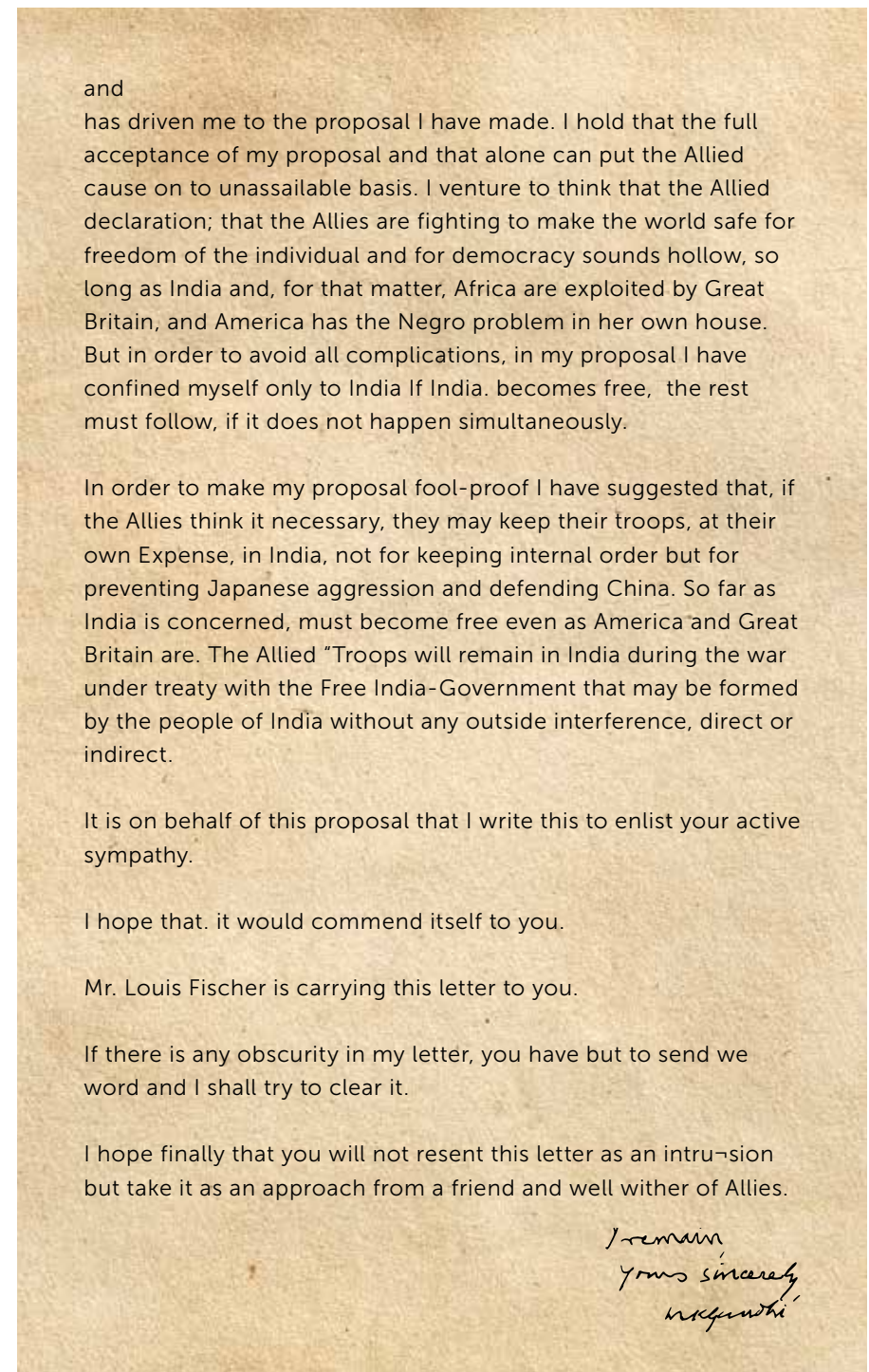
September 2019



▲ Mahatama Gandhi with Charkha

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MAHATMA GANDHI AND PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, 1942



▲ Letter from Mahatma Gandhi to then sitting-
President Franklin Roosevelt in June-July 1942.

Image Source: National Archives

August 1, 1942

My dear Mr, Gandhi;

I have received your letter of July 1, 1942, which you have thoughtfully sent me in order that I may better understand your plans, which I well know may have far-reaching effect upon developments important to your country and to mine.

I am sure that you will agree that the United States has consistently striven for and supported policies of fair dealing, of fair play, and of all related principles looking towards the creation of harmonious relations between nations. Nevertheless, now that war has come as a result of Axis dreams of world conquest, we, together with many other nations, are making a supreme effort to defeat those who would deny forever all hope of freedom throughout the world. I am enclosing a copy of an address of July 23 by the Secretary of State, made with my complete approval, which illustrates the attitude of this Government.

▲ *The last letters that President Roosevelt wrote to Mahatma Gandhi in August 1942 did not reach him before he was imprisoned on account of the Quit India resolution, but they are poignant and significant pieces of history.*

Image Source: National Archives



^ "To other countries I may go as a tourist, but to India I come as a pilgrim" – Martin Luther King, Jr.

Image Source: Alamy Image

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Martin Luther King Jr. Was Deeply Inspired by Mahatma's Gandhi's Non-Violence Movement

"Since being in India, I am more convinced than ever before that the method of nonviolent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for justice and human dignity. In a world since Mahatma Gandhi embodied in his life certain universal principles that are inherent in the moral structure of the universe, and these principles are as inescapable as the law of gravitation.

Many years ago, when Abraham Lincoln was shot - and incidentally, he was shot for the same reason that Mahatma Gandhi, was shot for, namely, for committing the crime of wanting to heal the wounds of a divided nation - and when he was shot, Secretary Stanton stood by the dead body of the great leader and said these words: Now he belongs to the ages. And in a real sense, we can say the same thing about Mahatma Gandhi, and even in stronger terms: Now he belongs to the ages. And if this age is to survive, it must follow the way of love and nonviolence that he so nobly illustrated in his life. And Mahatma Gandhi may well be God's appeal to this generation, for in a day when sputniks and explorers dash through outer space and guided ballistic missiles are carving highways of death through the stratosphere, no nation can win a war. Today, we no longer have a choice between violence and nonviolence; it is either non-violence or non-existence."

March 1959



POST INDEPENDENCE PRE-LIBERALIZATION RELATIONS

“No struggle in the world today deserves more of our time and attention than that which now grips the attention of all Asia...And that is the struggle between India and China for leadership of the East...We want India to win the race.”

*Senator John F. Kennedy
May 4, 1959*

^ President John F. Kennedy with Finance Minister, Morarji Desai, in 1962.

Image Source: Alamy Images

U.S.-INDIA RELATIONS HIT A LOW, 1955

Prime Minister Nehru's Defence Minister, Vengalil Krishnan Krishna Menon (V. K. Krishna Menon), had more detractors than fans in the West. He was described as acerbic and was known to give flamboyant speeches at the United Nations. His sharp ripostes did muddy the waters and affect fledgling relations with the U.S. Mr. Menon had long antagonized Western powers and was vilified in the West as "India's Rasputin," leading John Foster Dulles to conclude, even prior to becoming Secretary of State, that India was becoming communist.



India's Defence Minister V.K. Krishna Menon addresses UN delegates in San Francisco, 1955

Image Source: Getty Images



INDIA CHOOSES A THIRD BLOC IN A BIPOLAR WORLD, 1956

The Cold War presented countries with two power blocs, a Manichean duopoly of sorts - the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. bloc. The landmark Bandung Conference (in Indonesia) in 1955 saw nations from Asia and Africa congregate to discuss the role of developing economies in the Cold War, as decolonization gathered momentum. The first formalization of the movement took place in 1956. The Bandung Conference and its final resolution laid the foundation for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) during the Cold War. India, under Prime Minister Nehru, led the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) along with Sukarno of Indonesia, Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt, and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana.

^ Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, Egypt's President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Yugoslavia's President, Josip Broz Tito meet to sign the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement, 1961

Image Source: Alamy Images



THE SUEZ CRISIS REKINDLES U.S.-INDIA TIES, 1956

The Dulles brothers were warming up to Pakistan and got the newly formed Islamic country to join the Baghdad Pact and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) after India refused to do so. President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Nehru were fully aligned on the Suez Crisis of 1956, one of the seminal events in the history of decolonization. The U.S. and India worked together to support Egypt (led by fellow NAM leader, President Nasser) and opposed the Anglo-French-Israeli blockage of the Suez Canal. India's support helped ensure an Anglo-French defeat and the clear emergence of the U.S. as the pre-eminent Western power after the Suez crisis. British and French decolonization accelerated soon after.

▲ Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, arrived in Washington D.C. on December 16, 1956 on an official visit to the U.S.A. Photo shows the Prime Minister with President Eisenhower in the car leaving for the President's farm at Gettysburg for a discussion.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



FIRST LADY JACQUELINE (JACKIE) KENNEDY'S VISIT TO INDIA, 1962

When Jackie Kennedy visited India a year into her husband's administration, she won many hearts. Even though her husband never visited India, First Lady Jackie Kennedy was only 32 when she set foot on Indian shores. She was described as elegant and stylish and was said to be received enthusiastically by the adoring crowds. It was reported that Jackie Kennedy adorned 22 outfits in 9 days, setting the bar for style for future First Ladies. Of her time in India, she said, "it's been a dream."

^ American Ambassador to India John Kenneth Galbraith and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy at the U. S. Chancery, New Delhi.

Image Source: Alamy Images

INAUGURATION OF THE AMERICAN CENTER IN NEW DELHI, 1974

The American Center in New Delhi first opened its doors on April 25, 1974, in the presence of C. Subramaniam, Former Minister of Finance of India and Ambassador Daniel P. Moynihan. Ambassador Moynihan would go on to serve in a variety of diplomatic and political capacities, such as U.S. Ambassador to the UN, and was Senator from New York until his retirement, when the future Secretary of State would take his Senatorial seat.



^ *American Centre first opened its doors on April 25, 1974, in the presence of C. Subramaniam and Ambassador Daniel P. Moynihan.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

LILLIAN CARTER'S NOSTALGIC RETURN TO INDIA, 1977

Lillian Carter was the mother of the 39th U.S. President, Jimmy Carter. However, long before her son's iconic state visit to India in 1978, Lillian Carter was well-acquainted with the country. She was a Peace Corps volunteer at the age of 68. She first visited India in 1966, where she took lessons in Marathi and looked to work as a nurse at a medical center set up by the Godrej Group in Vikhroli (still present today). Lillian Carter would return to India in 1977 with her grandson, James Carter, and she was received warmly.



▲ *At the Vikhroli dispensary, Dr. G.D. Bhatia and G.L. Perumal Raja drape a stole around Lillian Carter's shoulders.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

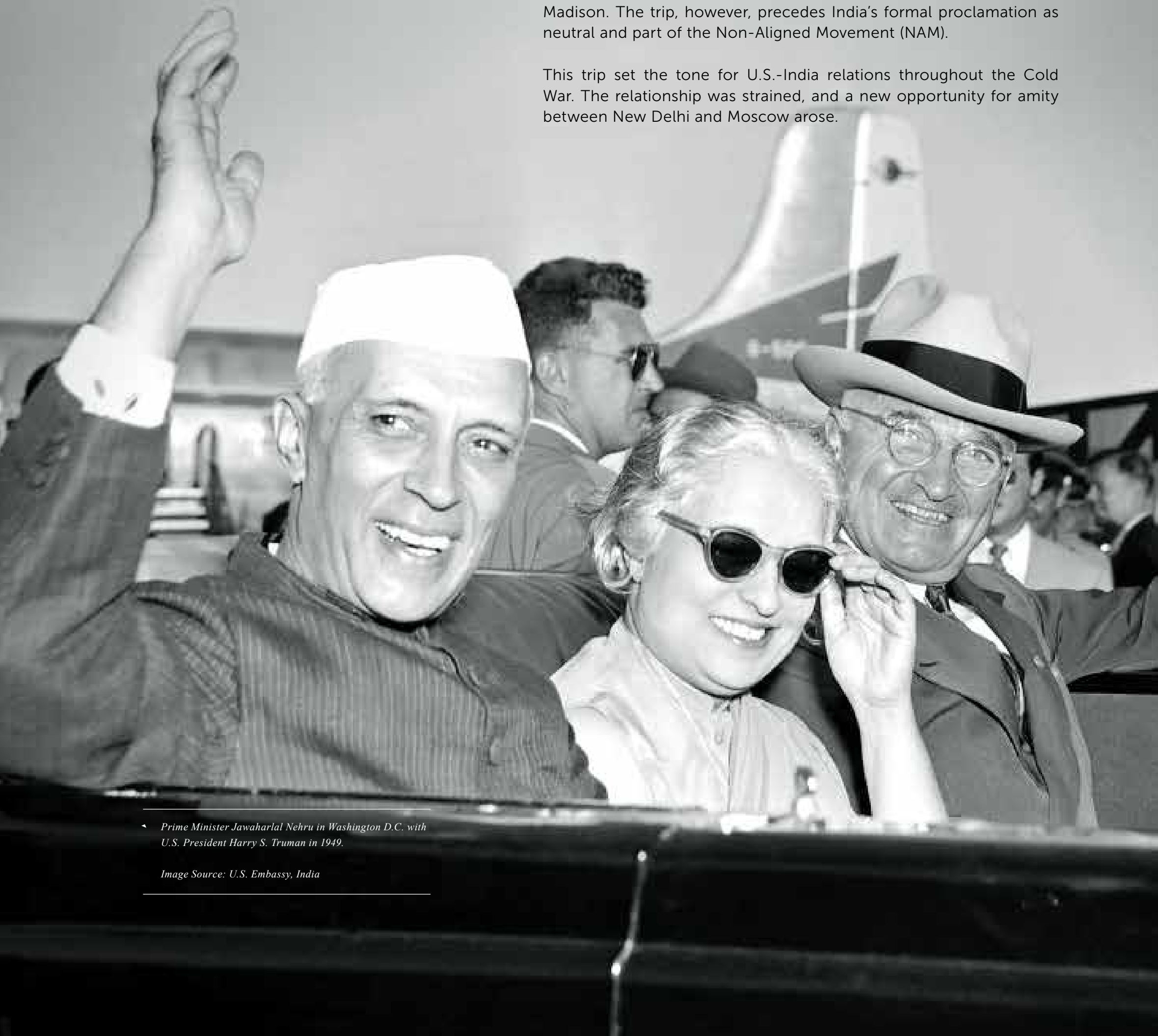
STATE VISITS

For the first 50 years after India's Independence, while India was non-aligned during majority of the Cold War, only three U.S. Presidents visited the country. In the last 25 years, there have been five presidential tours including that of President Donald Trump.

The first state visit between the two countries took place when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru arrived in Washington D.C to meet with President Harry S. Truman during October 11–15, 1949.

State Department archives show that Prime Minister Nehru's visit included New York City, Chicago, Knoxville, San Francisco, and Madison. The trip, however, precedes India's formal proclamation as neutral and part of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

This trip set the tone for U.S.-India relations throughout the Cold War. The relationship was strained, and a new opportunity for amity between New Delhi and Moscow arose.



Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in Washington D.C. with U.S. President Harry S. Truman in 1949.

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



U.S. President Harry S. Truman greets Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, 1949

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

PRIME MINISTER JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S FIRST VISIT TO THE U.S., 1949

“A hero in his country’s fight for freedom.” The “political heir and spiritual son” of Mahatma Gandhi. “The most influential leader of Asia.”

Such platitudes were common when describing India’s first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Whichever description accompanied him, it was clear that he was more than the leader of Asia’s largest democracy. Pandit (a Sanskrit word and title befitting a Hindu scholar) Nehru’s advocacy for the nonaligned nations’ movement and post-WWII decolonization gave him international stature, someone who belonged to the world, not just to his fellow Indians.



PRIME MINISTER JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S SECOND VISIT, 1956

Prime Minister Nehru later said, "To the people of India, I should like to say that the friendship of America is a treasure which we value and I am sure if these two countries cooperate it would add to the peace of the world and will lead to our mutual advantage."

▲ *President and First Lady Eisenhower greeting Prime Minister Nehru on his arrival at the White House.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER VISITS INDIA, 1959

President Dwight D. Eisenhower was the first sitting U.S. President to visit India. President Eisenhower or Ike, as he was known, had met with President Rajendra Prasad and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, and became the first American President to address the Indian Parliament and visit the Taj Mahal. This visit was during the start of the Cold War, as India declared itself “non-aligned.” The trip helped assuage Washington’s concerns that India was close to the Soviet Union and provided a new impetus for U.S.-India relations.

▲ *President Eisenhower attends the inauguration ceremony of the World Agricultural Fair in New Delhi.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



PRIME MINISTER JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S LAST VISIT TO WASHINGTON D.C., 1961

^ *Prime Minister Nehru talks with President John F. Kennedy at the White House in Washington on November 7, 1961.*

Image Source: Alamy Images

Prime Minister Nehru made his last official visit to the U.S. from November 5–14, 1961, visiting Washington D.C., Rhode Island, New York City, and Los Angeles.

VICE PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON'S INDIA VISIT, 1961

Lyndon B. Johnson was the first incumbent Vice President to visit India. He was known as the consummate hugging and handshaking politician. He treated the visit as just another campaign rather than a formal diplomatic event. Then U.S. Ambassador to India, John Kenneth Galbraith, accompanied Vice President Johnson during his visit.



▲ *India's Vice President Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, India's Finance Minister Morarji Desai, Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson and Dr. P. Subbarayan, Minister for Transport and Communications, Government of India.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

PRESIDENT DR. SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN'S STATE VISIT TO THE U.S., 1963

President S. Radhakrishnan visited Virginia, Pennsylvania, Florida, Colorado, California and New York. He was hosted by President Kennedy between June 3-5, 1963 in Washington D.C.



▲ *President Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan shakes hands with President John F. Kennedy upon his departure from the White House, following a state dinner in his honor. Left to right: President Kennedy; First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy; President S. Radhakrishnan; India's Ambassador to the United States, B. K. Nehru; U.S. Chief of Protocol, Angier Biddle Duke. North Portico, White House, Washington, D.C.*

Image Source: Alamy Images

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI'S STATE VISIT TO THE U.S., 1966

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi followed in her father's footsteps and made an official visit to Washington D.C. at the invitation of President Lyndon B. Johnson. Prime Minister Gandhi prioritized nation-building and securing aid packages for India's emerging grain requirements. This visit was on the back of the Green Revolution, the 1965 war with Pakistan, the signed agreement at Tashkent, and the United States' escalating war in Vietnam. Prime Minister Gandhi had also expressed concerns about freedom and territorial integrity presented to it by the aggressive policies of the People's Republic of China.



▲ Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at the President's Park (Ellipse) in Washington on March 28, 1966.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON'S STATE VISIT TO INDIA, 1969

President Richard M. Nixon visited India on July 31, 1969. Unlike his former boss, President Eisenhower, President Nixon spent less than a day in India. This trip was largely meant to reduce tensions between him and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Tensions would exacerbate two years later during the India and Pakistan war of 1971 - which led to the creation of Bangladesh. Pakistan was a Cold War ally. Washington sided with Islamabad as President Nixon prioritized his friendship with then-military dictator Yahya Khan, who was a key interlocutor in the detente between China and the U.S.

▲ *Prime Minister Indira Gandhi greets President Richard Nixon on his visit to India, 1969*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

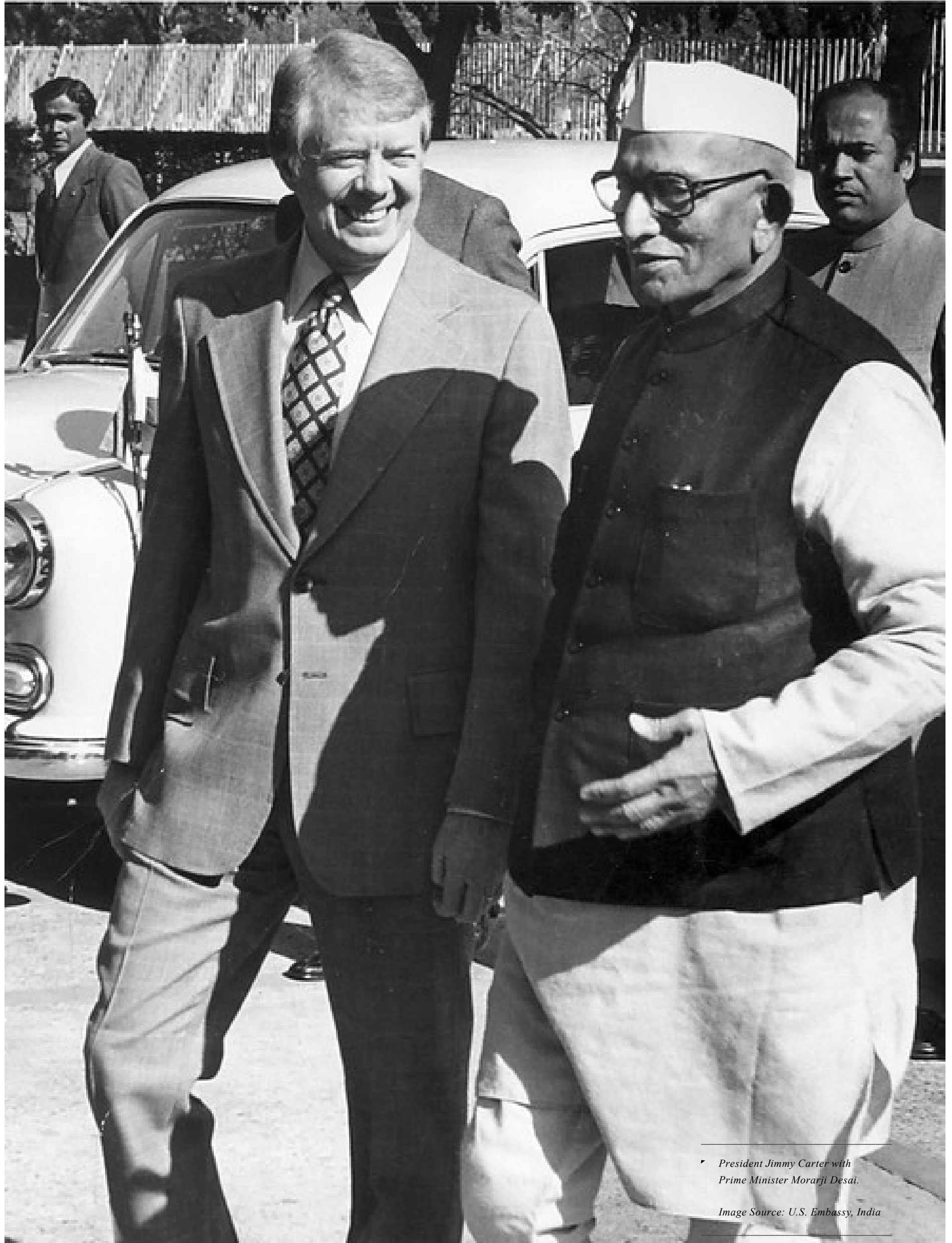
PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI'S SECOND STATE VISIT TO THE U.S., 1971

President Nixon hosted Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at the White House, just a month before India went to war with Pakistan in 1971. U.S.-India ties were at a low as both leaders were less than fond of each other and observers described it as an atmosphere of frostiness.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi with President Nixon at the White House on November 4, 1971.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India





▸ *President Jimmy Carter with
Prime Minister Morarji Desai.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER'S STATE VISIT TO INDIA, 1978

President Jimmy Carter made the third Presidential State Visit since India gained independence. President Carter's goal was to thaw tensions after the 1971 war and India's nuclear tests of 1974 and push for a reset in the tense relations. President Carter addressed the Indian Parliament and left a lasting impact on a tiny town near New Delhi, later rechristened as Carterpuri in his honor.



^ U.S. President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalynn Carter with President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy's granddaughter on January 1, 1978

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI'S STATE VISIT TO THE U.S., 1978

When Prime Minister Desai visited the U.S. in 1978, his focus was on raising India's objections to complete international inspection of its nuclear installations; at the time a requisite by the United States. Concerns were also on increasing economic cooperation, visas for Indian students coming to the U.S., and the shifting sands in Afghanistan, just before the Soviet invasion. President Carter and Prime Minister Morarji R. Desai formed strong bonds, a change from the Nixon-Gandhi years.

▼ *Prime Minister Morarji Desai with President Carter and First Lady Rosalynn Carter at the White House.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI'S THIRD VISIT TO THE U.S., 1982

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, now back in power, made a visit to Washington D.C., where she was received by President Ronald Reagan. The President spoke of the mutual importance of strong, constructive ties between India and the United States. In 1984, President Reagan would express grief at the assassination of Prime Minister Gandhi.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi replying to the welcome address by President Reagan at the ceremonial reception given to her at the White House in Washington D.C. on July 29, 1982.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India





PRIME MINISTER RAJIV GANDHI'S VISITS TO THE U.S. IN 1985 AND 1987


Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi would have two successful visits to the U.S., in 1985 and in 1987, where he met President Ronald Reagan. His first visit to the U.S. was after his mother's assassination. Prime Minister Gandhi would impress President Reagan with his youth, charisma, and emphasis on scientific and technological cooperation. This is where the U.S.-India relationship started to gradually change from aid to trade.

▲ *Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was received by President Ronald Reagan on his arrival at White House in Washington D.C. on June 12, 1985. Photo shows Prime Minister Gandhi replying to the welcome address.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

FROM ESTRANGEMENT TO ENGAGEMENT

This section focuses on the post-liberalization era. Post the Cold War, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, India abandoned the License Raj system and adopted free-market economic reforms. The allure of a billion-plus Indian market saw increased American investments and closer synergy in trade, security, and energy ties. From nuclear sanctions to nuclear synergy, much of the friendship that exists today was cultivated during this era. From three State Visits in 50 years to 5 in the next two decades, including a minimum of one by all sitting Presidents, this phase showcases the evolution of the strategic partnership between the two nations.



“One of my country’s most beloved writers, Mark Twain, once wrote that India - and I quote - ‘is the sole country under the sun that all desire to see, and having seen once, would not trade that glimpse for the shows of all the rest of globe combined.’”

-President Bill Clinton

March 2000

U.S. President Bill Clinton

Image Source: Shutterstock



PRIME MINISTER P.V. NARASIMHA RAO MEETS PRESIDENT GEORGE H.W. BUSH IN THE U.S., 1992

India had just opened its economy in 1991. Its relations with the U.S. were still in a hangover phase from the Cold War, and many in the D.C. circuit saw New Delhi as a close friend of the erstwhile Soviet Union. The next two decades would, however, transform the relationship.

▲ *President Bush meeting Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao at the sidelines of the UN Security Council summit, 1992.*

Image Source: Getty Images

PRIME MINISTER P.V. NARASIMHA RAO MEETS PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON, 1994

The inflection point in the strategic partnership between India and the United States would have to be a visit by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in June 1994. Raging insurgencies were taking place in Kashmir and Punjab, human rights groups were up in arms, and President Clinton did not shy away from bringing up Kashmir. No one spoke about India in any great prospect just yet. However, early in his tenure, Prime Minister Rao, along with Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, ushered in economic reforms, dismantling the archaic License Raj system and heralding a new economic vision for India.



◀ *The Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao with the President Bill Clinton at the Oval Office in Washington D.C. on May 19, 1994.*

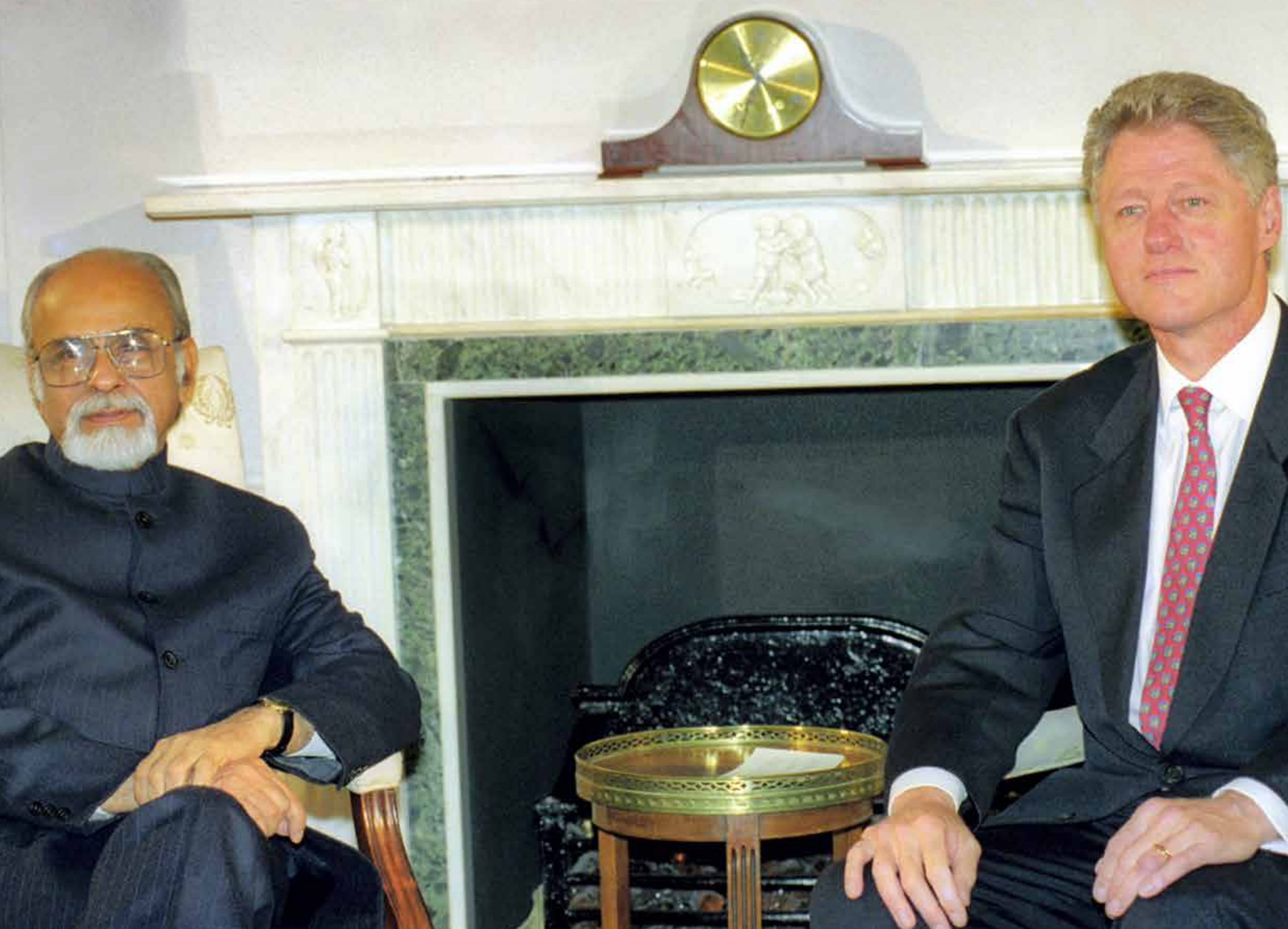
Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

PRIME MINISTER I.K.GUJRAL VISITS THE U.S., 1997

Inder Kumar Gujral (I.K. Gujral) served as Prime Minister for less than a year between April 21, 1997, to March 19, 1998. In that brief period, he found time to visit New York in September 1997 and met President Bill Clinton at the U.N. General Assembly the same year.

*Prime Minister I. K. Gujral meeting with
President Bill Clinton in New York, 1997.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India





PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON'S STATE VISIT TO INDIA, 2000

President Bill Clinton's visit in 2000 ushered in a new era in U.S. - India ties. President Clinton's India trip was the first by a U.S. President in more than 20 years (President Jimmy Carter had visited in 1978) and a landmark visit that came after a prolonged lull in the relations between the two countries. President Clinton's second term was different from his first one, which was perceived as hostile towards India as criticisms of human rights violations in Kashmir continued, and sanctions for India's Pokhran nuclear tests of 1998 set the relationship back. President Clinton visited with his daughter Chelsea, who was making her second visit to India. He visited Rajasthan, the Taj Mahal in Agra, and addressed the Parliament.

▲ *President K. R. Narayanan with President Bill Clinton.*

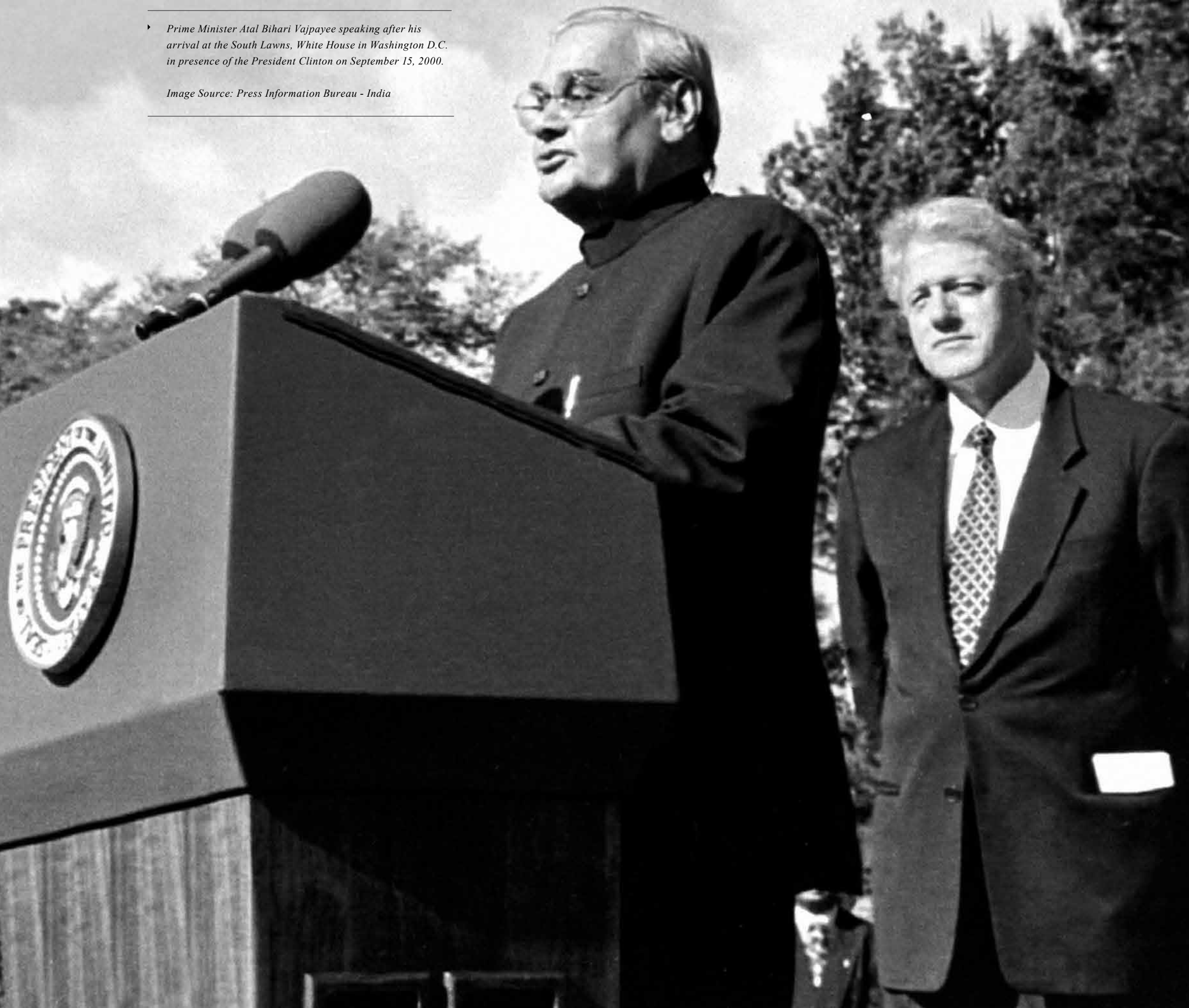
Image Source: Alamy Images

PRIME MINISTER ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE'S FIRST STATE VISIT TO THE U.S., 2000

Prime Minister Vajpayee visited the U.S. on four occasions, the first being September 13, 2000, where he addressed the Joint Session of the U.S. Congress. His visit was shortly after the Kargil War and before 9/11. Following on the heels of President Clinton's previous visit, Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit cemented stronger ties in U.S.-India relations.

▶ *Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee speaking after his arrival at the South Lawns, White House in Washington D.C. in presence of the President Clinton on September 15, 2000.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



PRIME MINISTER ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE VISITS THE U.S., 2001

9/11 changed the contours of American foreign policy, security, and launched a global war on terror. For too long, the Washington establishment had looked at terrorism as an isolated incident in dystopic lands. 9/11 shook that foundation. India and the United States pledged to jointly fight terrorism. President Bush and Prime Minister Vajpayee reaffirmed their commitment to eradicating the threat of terror. Prime Minister Vajpayee would continue to meet with President Bush at the UN General Assembly in New York in 2002 and 2003.

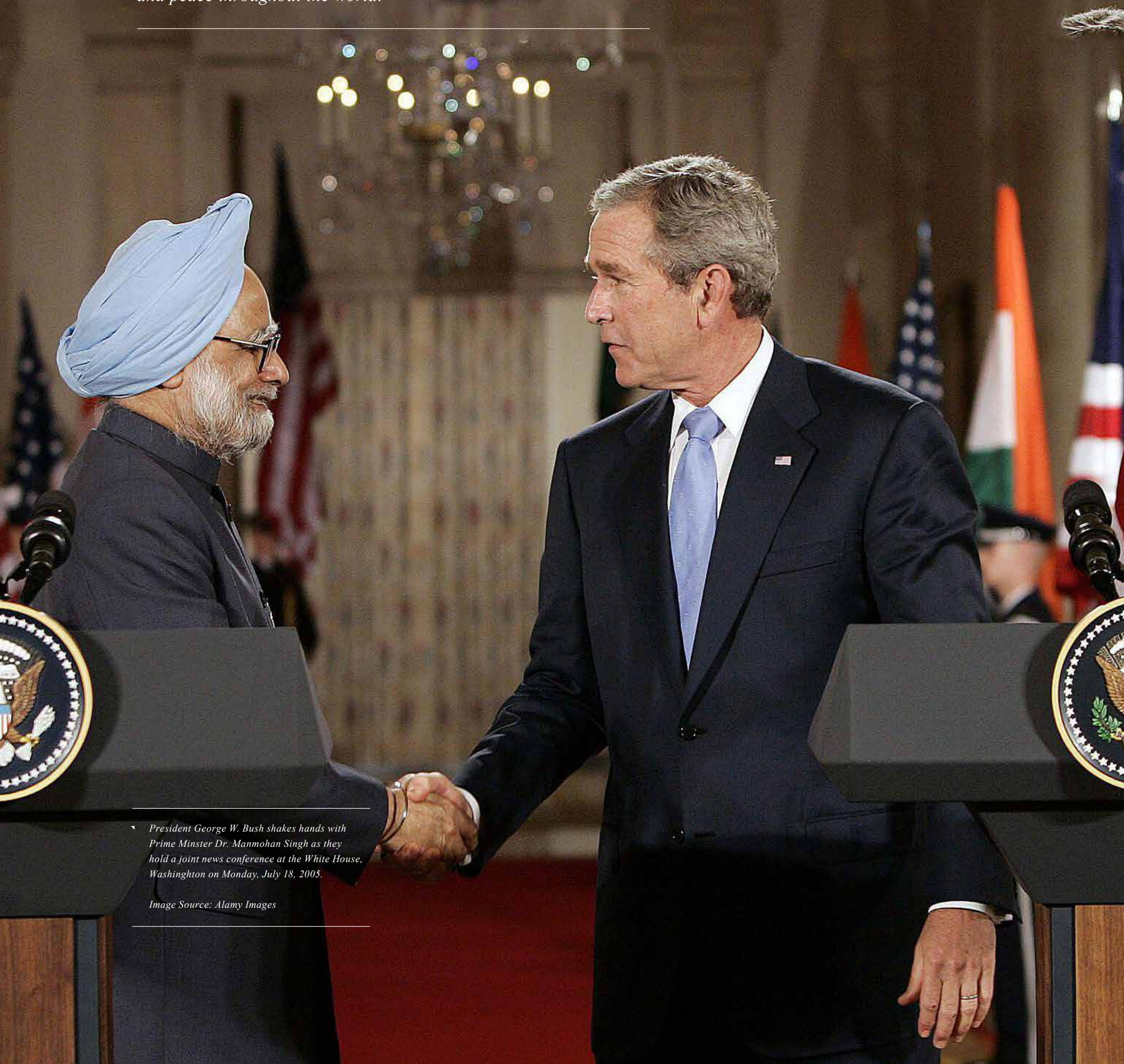


▼ *The day after the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, President George W. Bush met with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York City.*

Image Source: Getty Images

PRIME MINISTER DR. MANMOHAN SINGH VISITS THE U.S., 2005

At the invitation of President George W. Bush, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited the United States in July 2005. Both leaders reiterated the new relationship between New Delhi and Washington in a post 9/11 world, would promote stability, democracy, prosperity and peace throughout the world.



President George W. Bush shakes hands with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh as they hold a joint news conference at the White House, Washington on Monday, July 18, 2005.

Image Source: Alamy Images

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH VISITS INDIA, 2006

In terms of time, President George W. Bush's visit was seen as the shortest by a U.S. President after Richard Nixon's 23-hour stopover in 1969. However, it changed the contours of U.S.-India ties. From the Cold War hesitations of history and sanctions for the 1998 Pokhran tests, the agreement on civil nuclear cooperation became a watershed moment and transformed into a strategic partnership. The highlight of President George W. Bush's trip was the finalization of a landmark nuclear deal, which was agreed upon in 2005. Despite President Bush's proximity to Pakistan and military dictator General Pervez Musharraf, the U.S. & India moved closer in security and defense.



^ President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush at the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial in Rajghat, New Delhi.

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

U.S. President George W. Bush is welcomed by Indian president Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, during a welcome ceremony at the Presidential Palace in New Delhi, India, on March 2, 2006. The United States and India sealed a civilian nuclear deal which their leaders described as historic.

Image Source: Alamy Images



PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH'S STATE VISIT TO INDIA, 2006

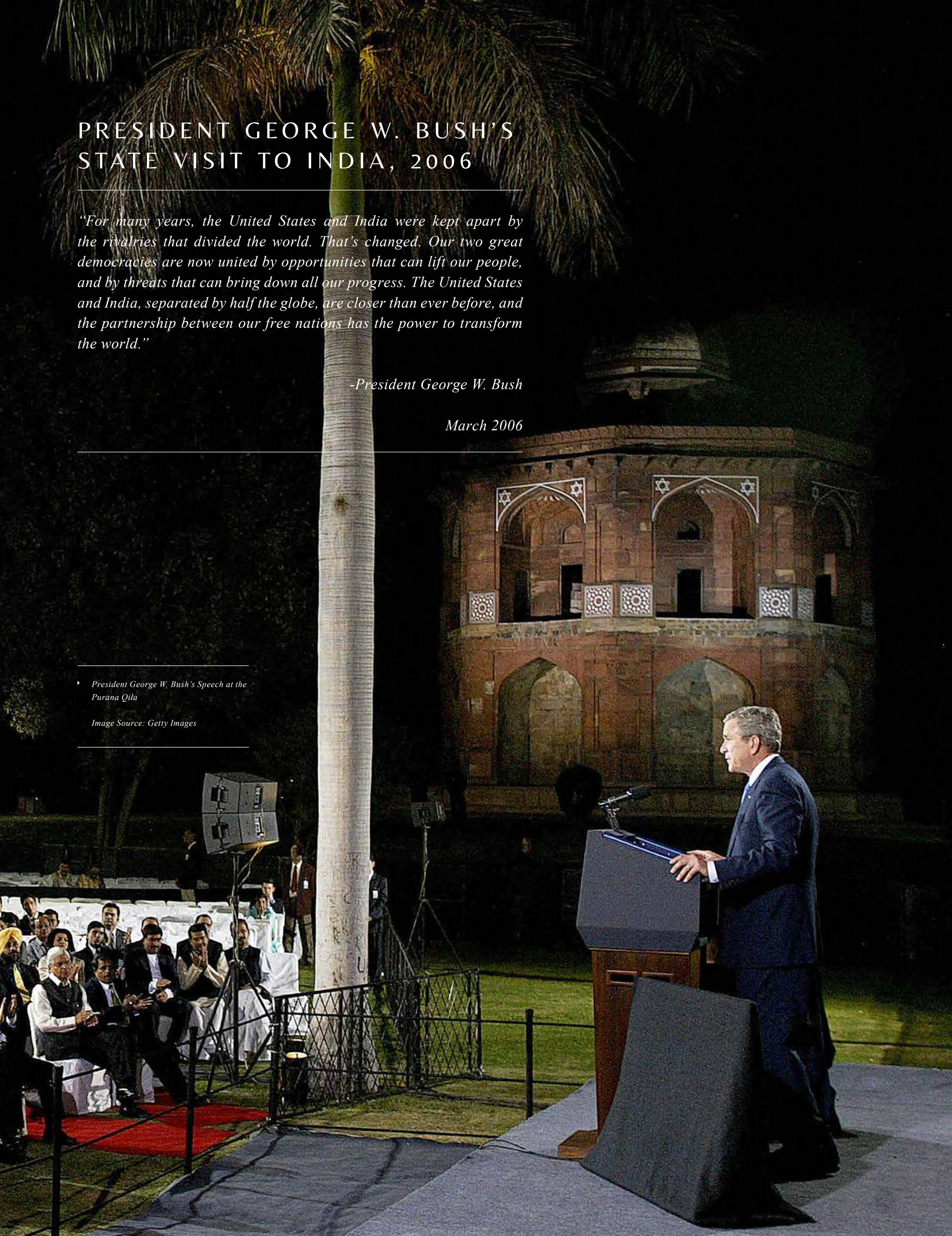
"For many years, the United States and India were kept apart by the rivalries that divided the world. That's changed. Our two great democracies are now united by opportunities that can lift our people, and by threats that can bring down all our progress. The United States and India, separated by half the globe, are closer than ever before, and the partnership between our free nations has the power to transform the world."

-President George W. Bush

March 2006

▶ *President George W. Bush's Speech at the
Purana Qila*

Image Source: Getty Images



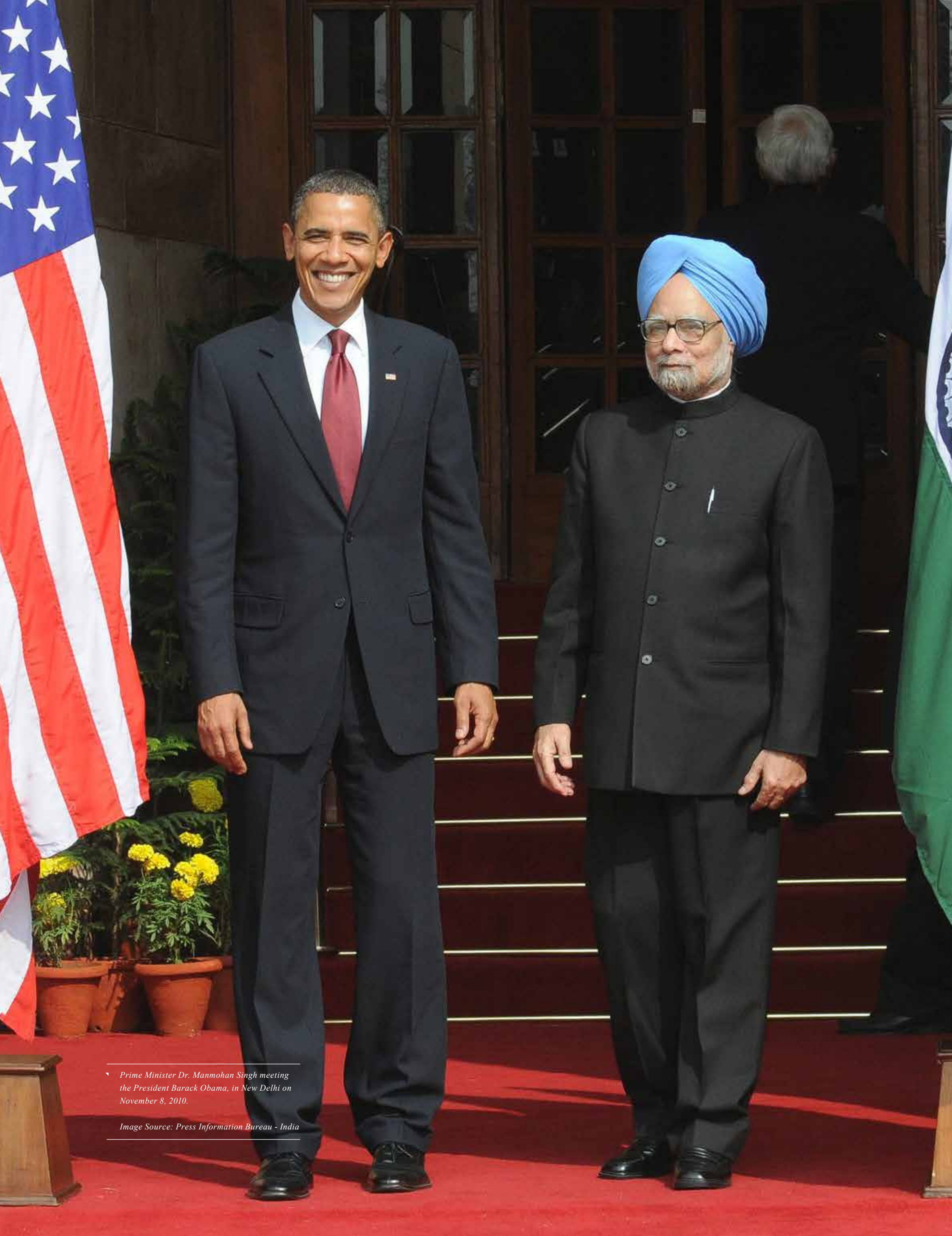


PRIME MINISTER
DR. MANMOHAN SINGH'S
VISIT TO WASHINGTON
D.C., 2009

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh was the first foreign leader to visit the 10-month-old Obama Administration.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Obama at the White House, November 2009

Image Source: Alamy Images



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting the President Barack Obama, in New Delhi on November 8, 2010.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S FIRST VISIT TO INDIA, 2010

President Barack Obama became only the second President after President Nixon to visit India in his first term in office and the fourth President to address the Parliament. In his speech, he described the U.S.-India relationship as “a defining partnership of the 21st century” and backed New Delhi’s quest for permanent membership in the UN Security Council. President Obama would later become the first sitting U.S. President to visit India twice during his tenure.



▲ *President Barack Obama along with First Lady Michelle Obama at the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, November 8, 2010.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

▲ *President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama enjoying a cultural program to celebrate Diwali - conducted by the students of Holy Name High School - in Mumbai on November 7, 2010.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S FIRST VISIT TO THE U.S., 2014

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received a massive mandate in 2014, the first time a majority was achieved by a party in 30 years. Much was debated about how Prime Minister Modi would approach relations with Washington D.C., given that he was denied a visa in 2006 when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat. Prime Minister Modi visited the U.S. in September 2014 to meet President Barack Obama. But the highlight of this trip was addressing a 20,000-strong Indian diaspora community at Madison Square Garden. It was rather unprecedented for a visiting leader and an Indian Prime Minister to command such a large audience. This address also set a precedent for future large rallies in the U.K., Australia, and Singapore.



President Barack Obama welcomes Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the dinner hosted in his honour at the White House in Washington DC on September 30, 2014.

Image Source: Alamy Images

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S SECOND VISIT TO INDIA, 2015

President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama visited India in January 2015. This was the first time Prime Minister Narendra Modi had received an American President since being sworn in 2014. President Obama was hosted at an "Abide with Me" State Dinner. He was given a Guard of Honor at the Rashtrapati Bhavan and was the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day parade. President Obama and Prime Minister Modi formed a personal rapport when President Obama revealed he was touched by Prime Minister Modi's childhood story - from selling tea to now leading the world's largest democracy. President Obama became the only sitting U.S. President to visit India twice.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with President Barack Obama.

Image Source: Alamy Images

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S STATE VISIT TO THE U.S., 2016

Prime Minister Modi had a final bilateral meeting with President Obama in 2016. This was one of his two visits in 2016. The first one was in March 2016, and the second one was in June 2016, when he addressed a Joint Meeting of the U.S. Congress. Prime Minister Modi also became the 5th Indian Prime Minister to address the United States Congress.

▼ *Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Barack Obama*

Image Source: Alamy Images



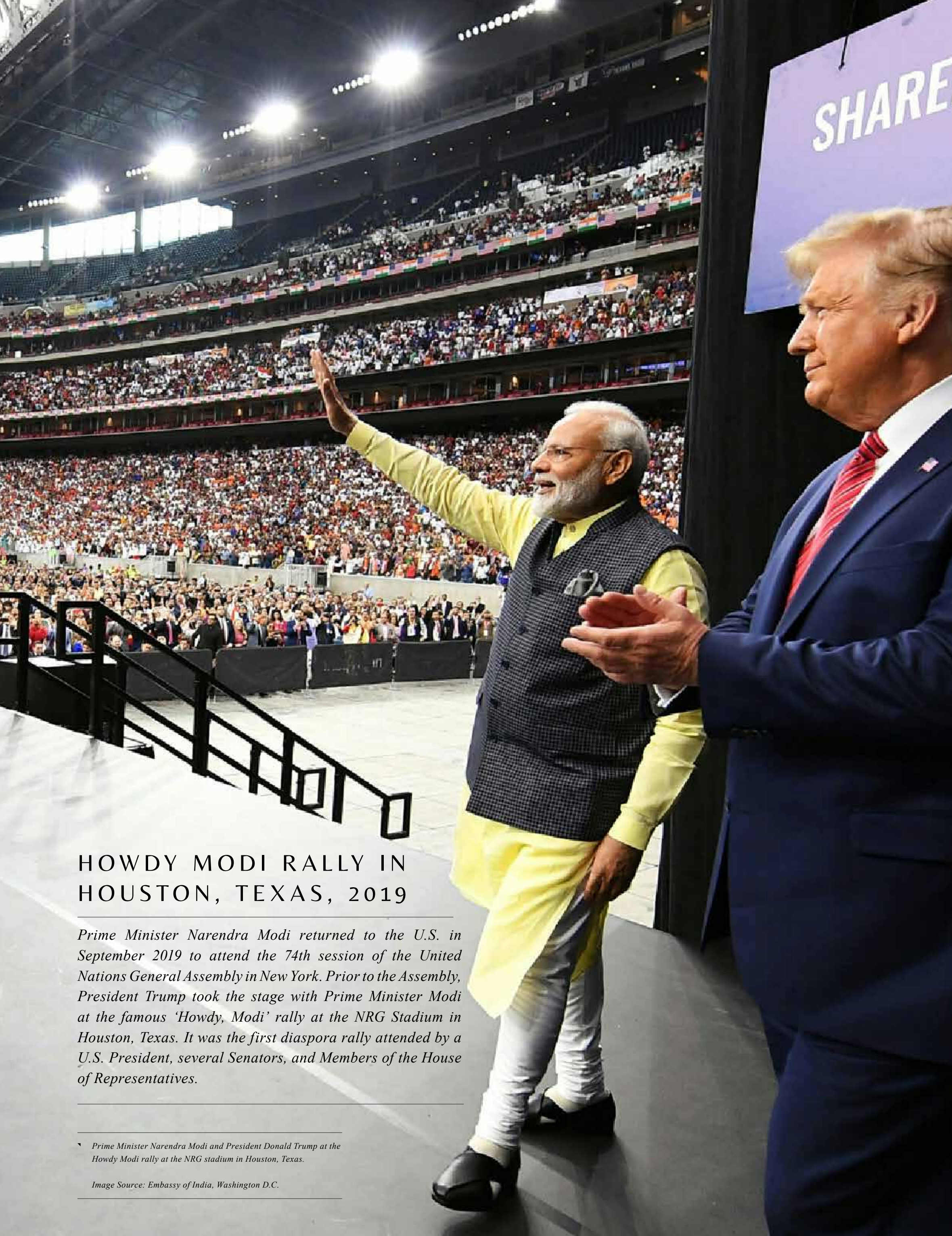
PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S STATE VISIT TO THE U.S., 2017

Prime Minister Modi made his fifth visit to the U.S. in 2017, the first with President Donald Trump, who had just taken over the Oval Office. Reports stated how President Trump and Prime Minister Modi were juxtaposed, as one was a golfer, the other a yoga enthusiast, one a carnivore, and the other a vegetarian. The two leaders formed a camaraderie. President Trump's use of the term "free and open Indo-Pacific" began to transform the strategic conversation about the region. The result was the revival of the Quad from an informal grouping to a robust strategic dialogue.

▼ Prime Minister Modi with President Donald Trump.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India





HOWDY MODI RALLY IN HOUSTON, TEXAS, 2019

Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned to the U.S. in September 2019 to attend the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Prior to the Assembly, President Trump took the stage with Prime Minister Modi at the famous 'Howdy, Modi' rally at the NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas. It was the first diaspora rally attended by a U.S. President, several Senators, and Members of the House of Representatives.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump at the Howdy Modi rally at the NRG stadium in Houston, Texas.

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

A photograph of President Donald Trump speaking at a podium during his first state visit to India in 2020. He is wearing a dark suit and a yellow tie. The podium features the Indian national emblem. In the background, a large, diverse crowd of people is visible, many wearing white caps. The scene is set outdoors, likely at a stadium.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S FIRST STATE VISIT TO INDIA, 2020

U.S. President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump made their first trip to India at the start of 2020, just weeks before the world shut down after the spread of the COVID-19 virus. President Trump's visit included Ahmedabad, Agra, and New Delhi with Namaste Trump (Hello Trump), a Howdy Modi rendition in Ahmedabad's Motera (now Narendra Modi) stadium - the largest cricket stadium in the world. President Trump was joined by First Lady Melania Trump, daughter Ivanka Trump, and son-in-law Jared Kushner.

► *President Trump in India in 2020.*

Image Source: Alamy Images

INAUGURAL IN-PERSON QUAD SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON D.C., 2021

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his sixth visit to the U.S. in 2021. He had the first bilateral meeting with newly elected U.S. President Joe Biden on the sidelines of the Quad Summit in Washington D.C. President Biden hosted Prime Minister Modi in the Oval Office, where they reiterated their vision for the U.S.-India partnership over the next decade. Prime Minister Modi also met with Vice President Kamala Harris (the first female Vice President who is of half-Indian origin), Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga at the sidelines of Quad.

◀ *Inaugural In-Person Quad Summit at the White House in Washington D.C.*

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.



FIRST QUAD LEADERS IN-PERSON MEETING IN WASHINGTON D.C. SEPTEMBER 2021

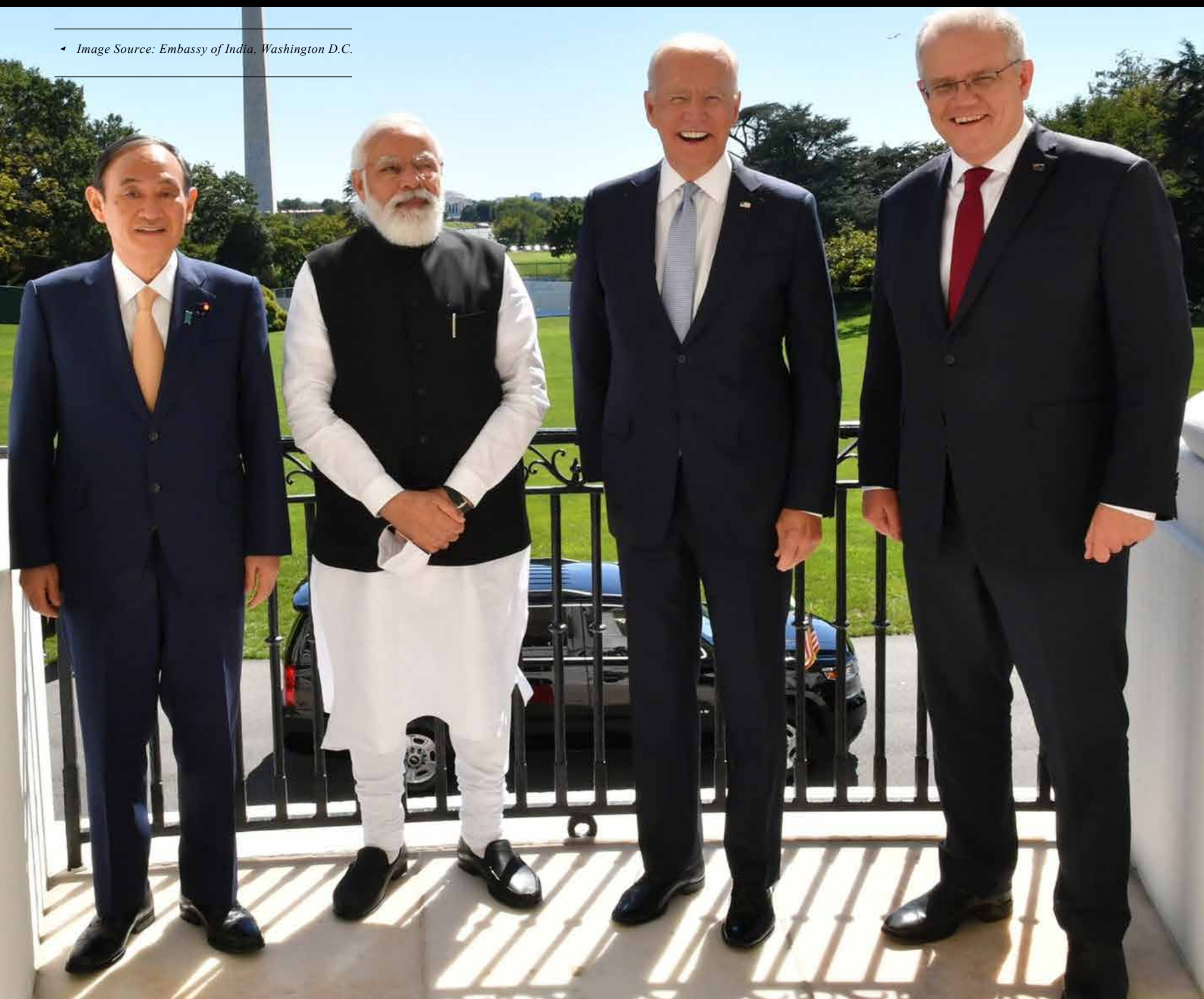
HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA

G20 CHIEF COORDINATOR, MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY OF INDIA, 2020-2022 AMBASSADOR
OF INDIA TO THE UNITED STATES, 2019 - 2020

“India-U.S. ties have emerged as one of the most defining partnerships in recent years. I have personally witnessed the spectacular growth in our cooperation cutting across key sectors such as trade and investment, healthcare, critical technologies, clean energy, defense and security, education and innovation and people-to-people ties. As two pluralistic vibrant democracies with shared values, we are natural partners of choice and working together on global issues in forging a peaceful and prosperous 21st-century.”

July 2022

◀ Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.



PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI AND PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN VIRTUAL MEET IN WASHINGTON D.C., 2022



President Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a virtual meeting with their foreign and defense deputies present. This served as a harbinger of a fruitful '2+2' dialogue between both countries.

During their virtual meeting, both President Biden and Prime Minister Modi expressed grave concern for the crisis in Ukraine and the humanitarian emergencies that had ensued.

Both leaders reiterated their shared democratic values sacrosanct to the strength and evolution of the partnership

and touched on shared synergies and convergences on trade, energy, and security ties. Prime Minister Modi emphasized India's evacuation efforts and condemned the loss of civilian life in the town of Bucha in Ukraine.

Emphasizing diplomacy and dialogue as the way forward, both leaders touched on the global food shortages arising out of the prolonged conflict in Ukraine. The underlying theme of the Biden-Modi virtual meet was that "democracies can deliver" in solving pressing problems in climate, security, and healthcare.

^ President Biden and Prime Minister Modi hold a virtual meeting before the fourth edition of the '2+2' talks in Washington D.C.

Image Source: Alamy Images

DR. HENRY KISSINGER

FORMER U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE, 1973-1977

FORMER U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR, 1969-1975

“Over the last 75 years, the relationship between the United States and India has developed into a vital, multi-dimensional partnership.

Since the days of Indira Gandhi, I have witnessed the keen and nuanced perception of the national interest and of world order that characterizes the activities of Indian strategists and diplomats. Over the decades, this has increasingly evolved as compatible with parallel perceptions in the U.S. India is perceived as an important and farsighted interlocutor. At the same time, our two peoples have grown ever closer and more intertwined. Continuing to deepen our friendship over the next century will benefit both nations and the world.”

July 2022

JOHN T. CHAMBERS

FOUNDER & CEO, JC2 VENTURES,
FORMER EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN AND CEO, CISCO SYSTEMS
CHAIRMAN, US-INDIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FORUM

“Throughout my career in Silicon Valley, and especially as a big believer and investor in startups, I’ve often been asked to spot winners early on. I can confidently say that when it comes to picking a winning economy in Asia, I would bet on India – in fact, if I had to bet on two countries in Asia, I would bet on India twice. India’s rapid economic evolution has not only benefited millions of citizens, but it has brought the U.S. and India closer together as partners. Synergy across the tech sector has highlighted both our nations’ strengths, with India’s robust tech talent and government-led digital policies, and the U.S. with the most sophisticated tech economy and home to the largest Fortune 100 companies in the world. Our shared goals and areas of strength to build a Digital Startup World are the mark of the symbiotic relationship between India and the U.S. This country-to-country partnership truly has the power to become the strongest and most strategic in the world.”

July 2022

02

AID TO TRADE

International relations scholars have claimed that Washington's bilateral relations with various economies are focused on aid, but when bilateral relations are strengthened, the conversation moves to trade. This chapter explores India's economic ties with the U.S. and how bilateral relations have moved from PL 480 food subsidies to exploring early harvest deals.

ANAND MAHINDRA

CHAIRMAN MAHINDRA GROUP

“It is difficult to imagine a stable and peaceful world order without a deep and strategic engagement, at many levels, between India and the USA. At a political level, they are both bastions of democracy, standing firm in a shifting world. In trade and commerce, they bring complementary strengths to the table. The U.S. is a role model for resilience and ease of doing business; the Indian concept of trusteeship of wealth is increasingly translating into purpose-led capitalism in the U.S. and elsewhere. At the person-to-person level, there is an enormous reservoir of goodwill between India and the U.S., which can make the world a kinder, gentler place”.

July 2022

INDRA NOOYI

FORMER CHAIRMAN AND CEO, PEPSICO

AUTHOR, MY LIFE IN FULL: WORK, FAMILY, AND OUR FUTURE

“I remember it like it was yesterday. One Tuesday in November 2009, after hours of meetings in Washington, DC, with two dozen top U.S. and Indian business executives, I found myself standing between the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of India. Barack Obama and Manmohan Singh had entered the room for an update on our group’s progress, and President Obama began introducing the American team to his Indian counterpart. When he got to me-Indra Nooyi, then CEO of PepsiCo-Prime Minister Singh exclaimed, “Oh! But she is one of us!” And the President, with a big smile and without missing a beat, responded, “Ah, but she is one of us, too!”

“I open my memoir, My Life in Full: Work, Family, and Our Future, with this vignette because it so beautifully captures a duality that has defined much of my life – and many of yours too. We belong to both of these worlds... to two great countries that have given us far more than we might have ever dreamed. The past 75 years serve as a testament to what all is possible when the world’s oldest democracy and the world’s largest democracy come together. I look forward to seeing the bond between the U.S. and India flourish further in the decades to come”.

July 2022

KENNETH I. JUSTER

U.S. AMBASSADOR TO INDIA, 2017-2021

U.S. UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR
INDUSTRY AND SECURITY, 2001-2005

“Over the past 22 years, the United States and India have steadily widened and deepened our partnership to cover almost every area of human endeavor.

I believe that this relationship is as consequential as any in international affairs -- both in the opportunities we have and in our potential impact on the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. Let us seize the moment and build a partnership that is strong and durable.”

July 2022

▲ *President Dwight D. Eisenhower and members of his party visit Laraonda - a village under the community Development Programme near Agra - on December 13, 1959, accompanied by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Photo shows the President acknowledging cheers from the villagers.*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

U.S.-INDIA COMMERCIAL RELATIONS

The earliest U.S.-India bilateral relations relied heavily on aid. The U.S.- India synergy now is pervasive across various areas from security, energy, environment to education. For an emerging and developing market such as India, American investments have been vital to its economic growth and job creation.





INDIA'S ECONOMIC REFORMS OF 1991

India was essentially a closed economy under the “License Raj” system, which saw centralized control on imports and investments. This stifled economic growth, thus precluding foreign investments. India’s large state-controlled industrial sector supplied the bulk of the domestic demand. The Union Minister for Industries, George Fernandes (later Defence Minister) had then asked American companies like Coca-Cola and IBM to leave the country.

While independent India is a 75-year story, India’s economic independence has seen little over three decades. The country was reeling from a balance of payment crisis after nearly four decades of a Soviet-style closed socialist economy. A seminal moment as India began opening the economy to trade and foreign investment after reforms introduced by Finance Minister Manmohan Singh under the aegis of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. These reforms essentially liberalized India’s economy, enhanced privatization, prepared India for a globalized world, and paved the way for American investments.

NAVTEJ SARNA

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE UNITED STATES, 2016 –2018

“The field of science and hi-tech embodies the genius of India and the United States: together our scientists, doctors and engineers have blazed a spectacular trail in stretching the frontiers of knowledge for Mankind. This partnership, which covers education, space, health, agriculture and many other areas of innovative cutting-edge technology, will continue to produce public goods with far-reaching societal impact and better the lives of not only the people of India and America, but of the entire world.”

July 2022

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Finance Minister (later Prime Minister) Manmohan Singh are seen as the architects of the reforms.

Image Source: Getty Images



INDIA-U.S. CEO FORUM, 2005

The India-U.S. CEO Forum was created in July 2005, and reconstituted in November 2009. An initiative by the Department of Commerce, this platform is a public-private effort to enhance bilateral trade and investment between the two robust democracies.

DAVID M. COTE

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN VERTIV,
FORMER CHAIRMAN & CEO HONEYWELL AND FORMER
U.S. CHAIR OF THE U.S.-INDIA CEO FORUM

“U.S.-India are destined to work together to help build a better world. The opportunities are great. It was an honor for me to be appointed by President Obama to Chair the U.S. Team of the U.S.-India CEO Forum to further that goal. As the CEO of Honeywell for many years, India was a wonderful growth engine for us. I sincerely hope the opportunity for our two countries to grow and work together becomes a cornerstone of economic and foreign policy”.

July 2022



U.S.-INDIA STRATEGIC AND COMMERCIAL DIALOGUE (S&CD), 2005 ONWARDS

The U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue has been the primary forum to advance shared objectives in regional security, economic cooperation, defense, trade, and climate challenges since 2009. In January 2015, during President Obama's visit to India, both he and Prime Minister Modi elevated the U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue to the Strategic and Commercial Dialogue, reflecting the countries' shared priorities of economic growth, creating jobs, improving the investment climate, and strengthening the middle class.

N. CHANDRASEKARAN

Chairman, Tata Sons

"The U.S. and India's relationship is ready to scale new heights. The deep ties between our people drive new frontiers in business, innovation and research. Advances in AI and data, the rebalancing of global supply chains and the transition to planet-resilient businesses provide huge opportunities for both countries to work together and shape a global model that advances prosperity, security and sustainable development."

July 2022

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Indian Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj .

Image Source: Alamy Images

U.S.-INDIA INFRASTRUCTURE COLLABORATION PLATFORM (ICP), 2015

The U.S.-India Infrastructure Collaboration Platform (ICP) is a joint interagency effort between the United States Department of Commerce and the Indian Ministry of Finance. The ICP is meant to facilitate U.S. industry participation in Indian infrastructure projects, leveraging the efficacy of private-public sector partnerships.

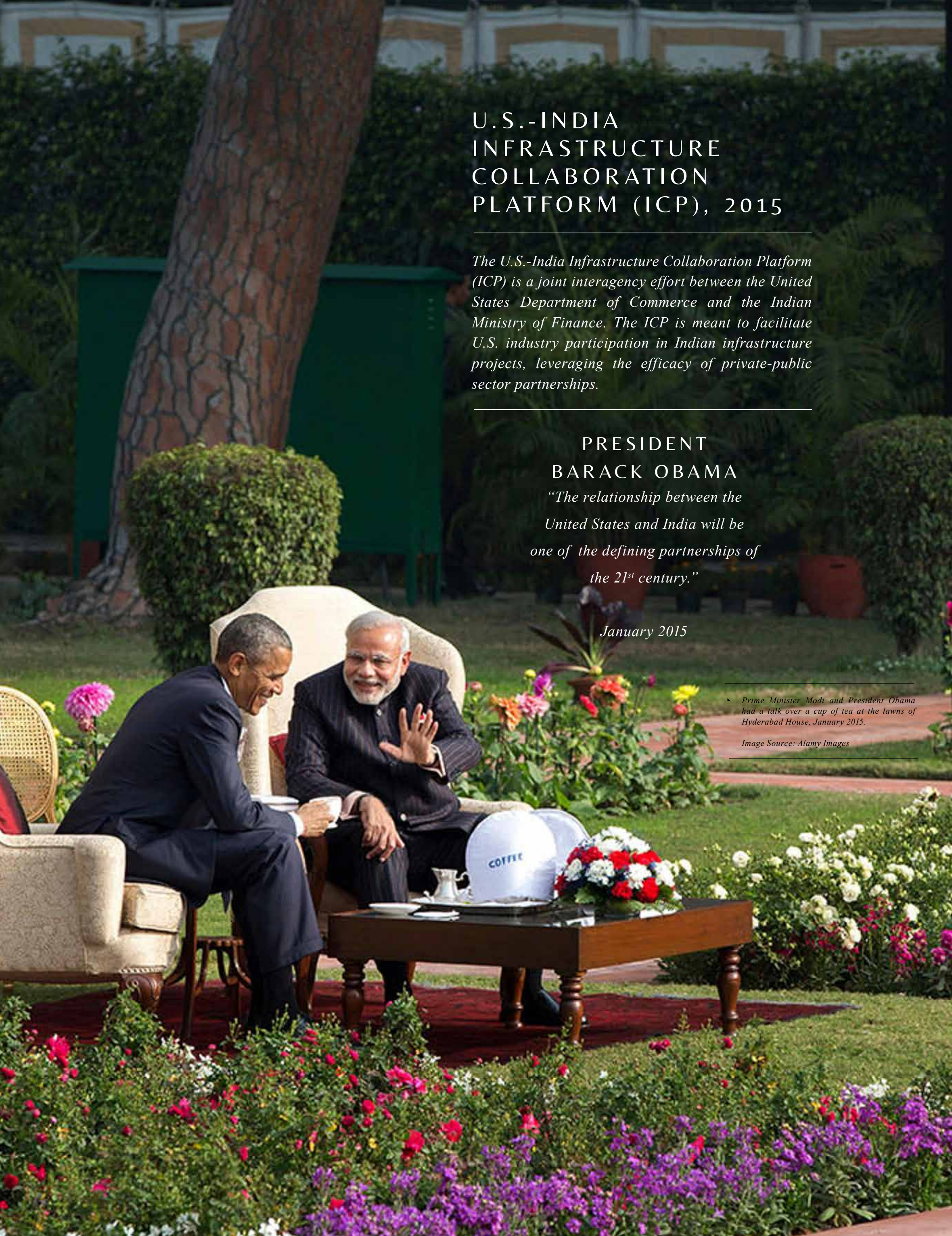
PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

“The relationship between the United States and India will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century.”

January 2015

Prime Minister Modi and President Obama had a talk over a cup of tea at the lawns of Hyderabad House, January 2015.

Image Source: Alamy Images





PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI VISITS SILICON VALLEY, CALIFORNIA, 2015

In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the West Coast. His trip to Silicon Valley is the first by an Indian Prime Minister in more than three decades.

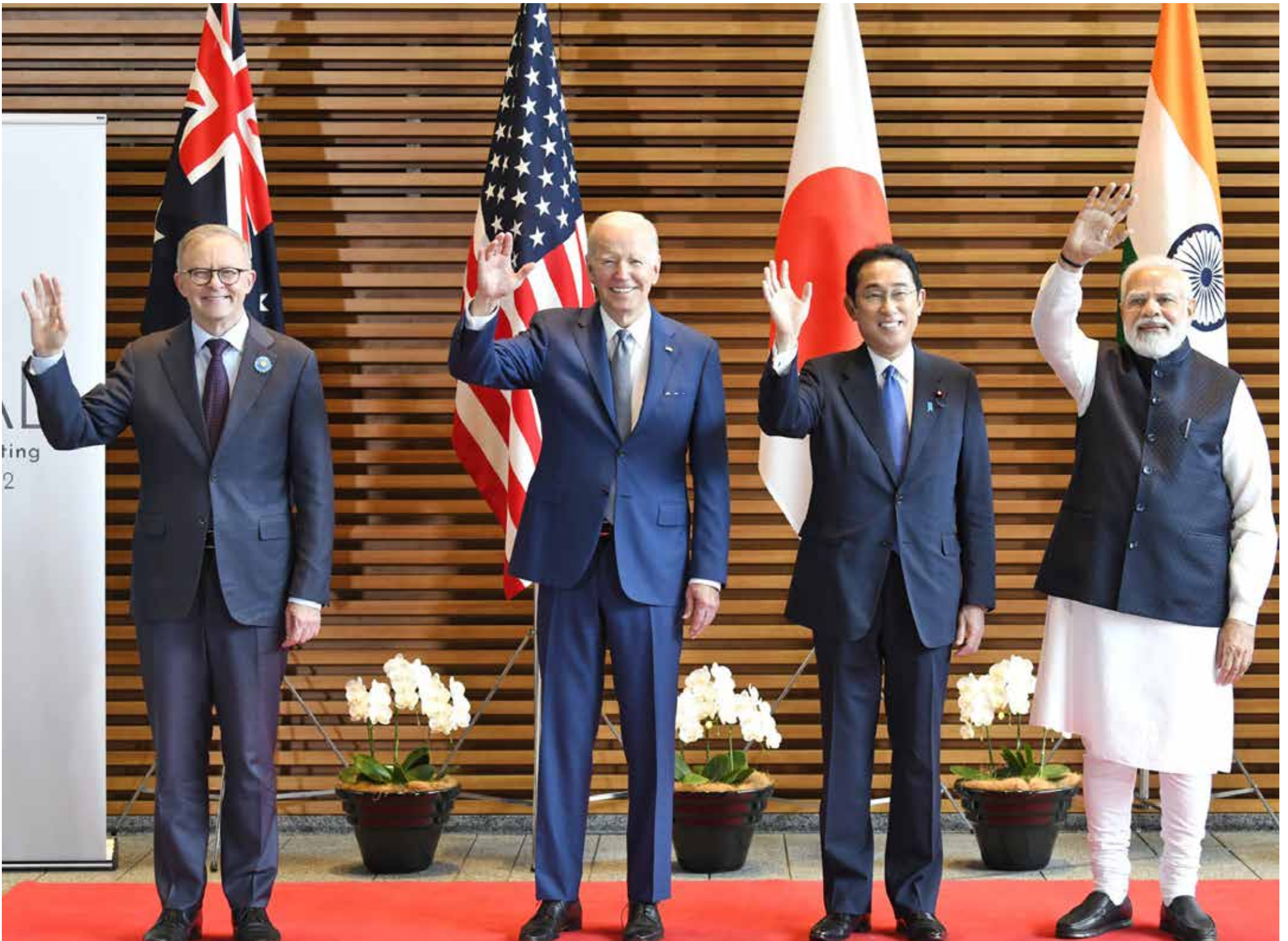
[^] Prime Minister Modi at the Digital India Dinner in San Jose, September 26, 2015

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

ARVIND PANAGARIYA

PROFESSOR, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK
FORMER VICE CHAIRMAN, NITI AAYOG, NEW DELHI

“As medical doctors serving across the length and breadth of the United States, faculty members in every academic discipline in the leading U.S. universities, CEOs of the top corporations in every sector of the U.S. economy and Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, Indian diaspora have been the face of India in the United States. They are the bridge connecting the world’s largest democracy with the oldest”.



INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK (IPEF), 2022

The United States and India envision an Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor that can bridge South and Southeast Asia at the nexus of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. In May 2022, President Biden, during his visit to Japan, launched the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity, (IPEF), in partnership with dozen other nations. The idea is to create a strong economic framework for the Indo-Pacific region focusing on physical infrastructure, increased trade, and promoting human and digital connectivity in the region.

The four Quad Leaders at the second in-person Quad Summit in Tokyo, Japan in May 2022 featuring Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, U.S. President Joe Biden and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.



INDIA-U.S. TRADE POLICY FORUM, 2021

The United States and India have set up forums such as the Trade Policy Forum, (TPF), to engage on a wide range of policy issues impacting bilateral trade and investment. In November 2021, the U.S. and India restarted the TPF after a hiatus of four years to address specific issues pertaining to trade.

^ Twelfth Ministerial-level meeting of the India-United States Trade Policy Forum (TPF) in New Delhi on November 23, 2021.

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

ROBERT D. BLACKWILL

U.S. AMBASSADOR TO INDIA, 2001-2003

“The United States and India have together crucially strengthened the balance of power in Asia during the first two decades of this century. As partners, they also stoutly defend democratic values, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and the sovereign equality of states. They make the planet safer.”

July 2022

KANWAL SIBAL

FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY OF INDIA, 2001-2002

“India’s wide-ranging ties with the U.S. beyond serving their bilateral interests which have to be managed in a changing global environment contribute significantly to global stability, especially in the Indo-Pacific region where both countries face rising challenges. India and the U.S. will be major pillars of an evolving rules based and reformed democratic international order.”

July 2022

03

UNITED WE STAND

The commercial and strategic partnership with the United States is robust. Washington and New Delhi share strategic concerns about belligerent forces in the Indo-Pacific region. Defense cooperation has been sacrosanct to the India-U.S. strategic partnership in the last decade. India and the United States have consolidated their defense partnership from nuclear sanctions after the Pokhran tests of 1998 to nuclear synergy with the Civil Nuclear Deal in 2005. This chapter seeks to highlight how India and the United States went from virtually near-zero in 2008 to USD 20 billion in investments in 2020 (according to the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs of the U.S. State Department).

SINO-INDIA CONFLICT, 1962

While the U.S.-India defense relationship is seen as a 21st-century story, its origins began as early as 1962, when President John F. Kennedy (JFK) received Prime Minister Nehru's letter requesting help in the Sino-Indian conflict. However, before any American aid was provided, China, under Mao Zedong, announced a unilateral ceasefire.



▶ *Prime Minister Nehru with President Kennedy.*

Image Source: Alamy Images



INDO-PAK WAR, 1965

Until the 1965 and 1971 wars, military relations between Washington and New Delhi were friendly. One of the turning points came when then U.S. President Lyndon Johnson's government did little to prevent the escalating conflict between India and Pakistan, that later became a 21-day war in September. President Johnson even chaired a special meeting to discuss the crisis in the subcontinent, but his advisors instructed him to "sit it out."

▼ *President Johnson with Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense Robert Mc Namara discussing the possible Chinese threat, following the 1965 invasion of Kashmir by Pakistan.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



Famous Test site for India's first successful underground nuclear bomb test, Smiling buddha or Pokhran I. Also Pokhran II, Shakti, tested later here.

Image Source: Shutterstock

INDIA GOES NUCLEAR, 1974

Three years after the 1971 war, India under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi conducted nuclear tests code named 'Operation Smiling Buddha', in the Pokhran firing range in Rajasthan. An illustration showing frontpage headlines reacting to India's nuclear tests.

**India is angered by
A-test critics**

**Some questions and
answers on India's test
of a Nuclear device**

^ Image Source: Headline sourced from the NY Times Archive



U.S. ENACTS NON-PROLIFERATION ACT, 1978

The Carter administration enacted the Nuclear Non-proliferation Act in 1978. This required countries not included in the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), including India, to allow inspections of all nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). India was unwilling, and Washington ended all nuclear assistance to New Delhi.

“This legislation takes a major step forward in clarifying our own Nation’s policy. I think it would be a much more predictable factor in the decisions made by foreign nations.”

*President
Jimmy Carter*

March 1978

^ *President Jimmy Carter signs the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, 1978 on March 10.*

Image Source: Getty Images



INDIA NOW A NUCLEAR STATE, 1998

The BJP-led NDA government under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee announced the successful completion of a series of underground nuclear tests. This took U.S. intelligence by surprise and raised fears of escalating conflict between India and Pakistan, as Islamabad (not nuclear then), was in the process of developing nuclear capabilities. The tests drew international ire, Washington recalled its Ambassador in New Delhi, and President Bill Clinton imposed economic sanctions.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visits Pokhran.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

THAWING OF RELATIONS, A NEW BEGINNING, 2001

If the first fifty years of the U.S.-India defense relationship were seen as lukewarm and estranged, the next two decades would see an immediate thawing and a rapidly burgeoning defense partnership. Under the new Bush administration, U.S.-India relations developed at a pace that few could have foreseen. At the start of the new millennium, in 2001, the U.S. arms embargo on India ended. The post 9/11 world saw India as a key partner on the War on Terror. On September 22, 2001, President George W. Bush waived all nuclear-related sanctions on India.

▶ *President Bush meets with Prime Minister Vajpayee at the White House in November 2001.*

Image Source: Getty Images



PRIME MINISTER MANMOHAN SINGH'S VISIT TO NEW YORK, 2004

- *Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Mrs. Gursharan Kaur paying homage to the victims of September 11, 2001 attack at Ground Zero, in New York in 2004.*

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.





U.S. AND INDIA SIGN NEW DEFENSE FRAMEWORK, 2005

The United States and India signed the New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship which set priorities for defense cooperation in maritime security, humanitarian assistance or disaster relief, and counterterrorism. The two countries would begin conducted naval air and land exercises.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld shakes hands with Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee.

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

ASHLEY J. TELLIS

SENIOR FELLOW, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT

FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

FORMER SENIOR ADVISOR TO U.S. AMBASSADOR TO INDIA, ROBERT BLACKWILL FROM 2000-2002

“Given their checkered history, it is hard to believe that defense cooperation today leads the continuing transformation of U.S.-Indian relations. Yet here we are—facing unparalleled promise because the turbulence in global politics cannot be quelled without the oldest and largest democracies combining their strength in service of the common good.”

July 2022



*Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with
President George W. Bush in India.*

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

LANDMARK CIVIL NUCLEAR DEAL DRAFTED, 2005

2005 was an inflection point in the relationship, which saw the change in the partnership from diplomatic bonhomie to a truly strategic partnership. That year, India and the United States framed the Landmark Civil Nuclear Deal. India went from nuclear sanctions imposed on it to nuclear synergy with the U.S. In March 2006, President Bush made a visit to India, where he and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh finalized the framework of the civil nuclear deal. It was later completed in July 2007, making India the only country outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty that has nuclear capabilities and is allowed to participate in nuclear commerce. The deal was inked in 2008.

SHYAM SARAN

FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY OF INDIA, 2004-2006

“In a world of mounting unpredictability’s and rapid change, the India-U.S. partnership remains a stable and reassuring anchor. It enables the two vibrant democracies to make the future safe for democracy and provide a safe haven for the human spirit. We are still in the early phase of an exciting journey and the best is yet to come.”

July 2022



THE NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP, 2008

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), an Intergovernmental body that sets guidelines for nuclear exports, allowed an exemption that permitted India to engage in nuclear trade for the first time in three decades. The waiver was approved following intense diplomatic efforts by the Bush administration, dating back to 2005.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee shake hands at the State Department in Washington, D.C.

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

RONEN SEN

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE UNITED STATES, 2004-2009

“We achieved a lot in those five years. The historic civil nuclear deal and the pioneering long-term defence framework stood out. However, our most wide-ranging and forward-looking bilateral engagement included several other initiatives in agriculture, business, education, energy, science & technology, trade & investments-U.S. exports doubled; trade imbalance almost halved-, air connectivity increased from zero to five non-stop daily flights....”

July 2022

U.S. DEFENSE COMPANIES INCREASE INVESTMENTS IN INDIA, 2009

The American companies Lockheed Martin and Boeing gradually increased sales to India. Deals such as six C-130J transport aircraft and a USD 2.1 billion deal for eight high-tech P-8 ASW aircraft have been signed. President Barack Obama's administration had cleared over USD 2 billion in sales to India of eight Boeing P-8I maritime patrol aircraft - the largest U.S. arms transfer to India to date.



▸ IAF C-130J in its flaring glory.

Image Source: Lockheed Martin Corporation

THE MILITARY MOMENTUM CONTINUES, 2015

Since 2015, the U.S. has authorized India over \$3 billion in defense equipment via the Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) process, which licenses the export of the defense equipment, services, and related manufacturing technologies controlled under the 21 categories of the U.S. Munitions List (USML).

LALIT MANSINGH

FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY OF INDIA, 1999-2001

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE UNITED STATES, 2001-2004

“Just two decades ago, a distinguished U.S. scholar wrote that many Americans saw India as ‘an object of charity not strategy’... And while that is no longer true, if ever it was, nothing prepared us for the spectacular upswing in our bilateral relations, especially in defence ties. Dramatic changes include India’s access to state-of-art defence technology, joint exercises and defence cooperation on land, sea, in air and cyberspace. Importantly, the two countries are reinforcing their strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific. ‘The defining partnership of the 21st century’ predicted by President Obama is finally taking shape”.

July 2022

Boeing completes delivery of 11 C-17 Globemaster IIIs to the Indian Air Force, 2019

Image Source: The Boeing Company



INDIA AS A MAJOR DEFENSE PARTNER, 2016

President Barack Obama meets with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the Oval Office at the White House on June 7, 2016 in Washington, D.C.

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

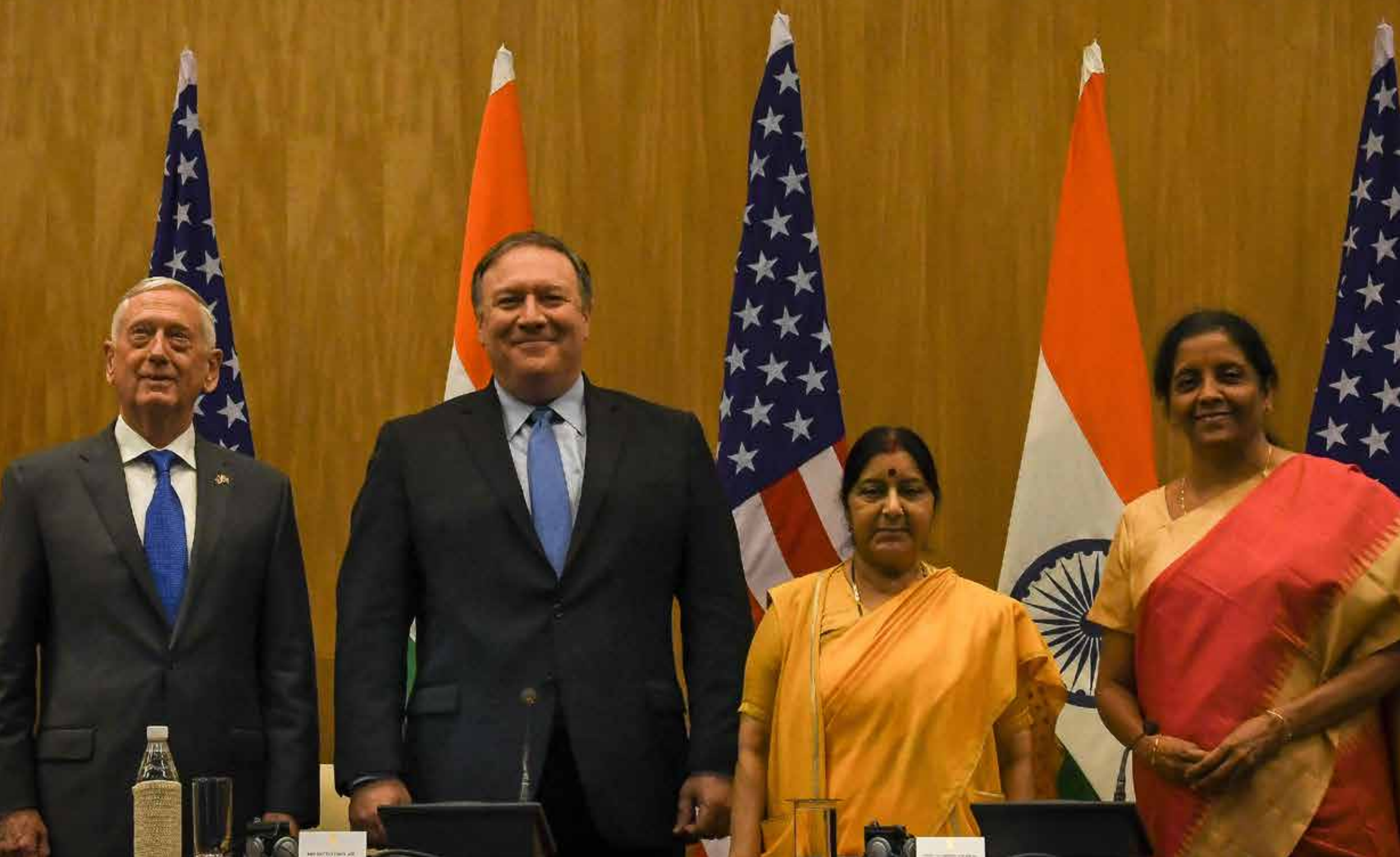


INAUGURAL U.S.-INDIA 2+2 MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE, 2018

Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis at a joint press conference after the inaugural U.S-India 2 + 2 Dialogue in New Delhi in September 2018. The highlight of this summit was the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA), which deals with secure military communication.

Left to Right: Secretary of Defence Jim Mattis, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj, and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman present statements to the media following a meeting in New Delhi on September 6, 2018.

Image Source: Alamy Images





YUDH ABHYAS, 2021

Yudh Abhyas is a bilateral training exercise aimed at improving the combined interoperability of the Indian army and U.S. Army to increase partner capacity for conventional, complex and future contingencies throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

U.S.-India Defence Cooperation, the Joint Military Training Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2021.

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

MALABAR EXERCISES, 2021

Now the Malabar exercise also includes Japan and Australia. Malabar is a multilateral war-gaming naval exercise that was started in 1992. It began as a bilateral exercise between the navies of India and the United States.

▼ *The 25th edition of MALABAR, being conducted in two phases, in the Bay of Bengal from 12th –15th Oct 2021.*

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

ARUN K. SINGH

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE UNITED STATES, 2015-2016

“The India- U.S. relationship has come a long way, particularly since 2000, marked by growing strategic convergences, technology and defense collaboration, and now revealed ability to manage and accept differences. Deepening people to people, education and cultural linkages provide an important ballast. The current global flux makes the partnership useful to both, as they seek to intensify their multi - dimensional cooperation through new effort in critical and emerging technologies, and the bilateral convergences with new plurilateral and quadrilateral formats including in the Indo - Pacific and in West Asia.”

July 2022



U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE LLOYD AUSTIN VISITS INDIA, 2021

In 2021, U.S. Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin visited India and reiterated a shared U.S.-India vision of securing a free and open Indo-Pacific. Washington and New Delhi, along with their Quad partners in Canberra and Tokyo, were gearing up for the inaugural in-person Quad Summit.



U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin visits India to boost security ties.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

FRANK G. WISNER

U.S. Ambassador to India, 1994-1997

“While my passage to India was by no means as dramatic as E.M. Forster’s great tale by the same name, it does parallel the modern U.S.-India relationship. That relationship is of exceptional importance to the United States and will be for decades to come. It rests on four strong pillars -- strategic, commercial, investment and political. Shortly after the announcement of my assignment to India, I spoke with Ambassador John Kenneth Galbraith and told him of the President’s decision. After hearing me out, Dr. Galbraith paused and said “welcome, Frank, to a life sentence”. His words proved to be prescient.”

July 2022

RICHARD RAHUL VERMA

U.S. Ambassador to India, 2015 -2017
Head of Global Public Policy and General Counsel, MasterCard

“The U.S.-India partnership stands out for its commitment to shared values, for its embrace of innovation, new technologies and discovery, and for the promise that it holds for the decades ahead. This is the defining partnership of the 21st Century, and the next 75 years of our journey together will be even stronger and benefit even more people across the world.”

July 2022

04

SYNERGY, SUMMITS, AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Beyond state visits featuring Prime Ministers and Presidents, there have been a host of high-profile U.S.-India bilateral and multilateral summits that have impacted, shaped, and consolidated economic, trade, and defense relationships. These include the '2+2' strategic dialogue between the Foreign and Defence Ministers and Secretaries of State and Defense, the more recent Quad Summit, the Economic Partnership, the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership, and more.

EXPANDING BILATERAL COOPERATION

This chapter highlights areas of cooperation beyond defense. such as the 2+2 strategic dialogue between the Foreign and Defence Ministers and Secretaries of State and Defense, Quad Summits, Economic Partnership, Strategic Clean Energy Partnership, and more.

▲ Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with President George W. Bush.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India





U.S.-INDIA AGREEMENT BRINGS INDIAN MANGOES INTO U.S., 2007

In a move to boost agricultural trade, U.S. and India signed a deal in 2007. The Alphonso and Kesar varieties were among the first Indian mangoes to arrive in the U.S.

In March 2006, the countries agreed to work to strengthen trade relations. After months of negotiations, the U.S. decided to import Indian mangoes after clearing concerns about insect importation.

In exchange for mangoes, India relaxed restrictions to allow the import of Harley Davidson motorcycles. This ended a 17-year-old trade dispute between the two countries. The mango-for-motorcycles diplomacy helped increase bilateral trade between India and the U.S. from around USD 30 billion in 2006 to five times that amount today, close to USD 150 billion.

⁴ *When Indian mangoes returned to the United States.*

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

U.S.-INDIA ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIP, 2010 ONWARDS

The U.S.-India Economic & Financial Partnership is a dialogue to deepen economic ties, promote financial sector reforms and has most recently included climate finance to its agenda.



^ *Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman meets Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



Secretary Tim Geithner with
Finance Minister Palaniappan
Chidambaram

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



Treasury Secretary
Jacob Lew and Finance
Minister Arun Jaitley

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee
and Treasury Secretary Timothy
Geithner

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

U.S.-INDIA STRATEGIC DIALOGUES, 2010 ONWARDS

The U.S. - India strategic dialogue encompasses all aspects of the bilateral partnership, including in the area of climate change and expanding engagement in education, science and technology.



^ From left - Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna, and President Barack Obama

Image Source: Embassy of India, Washington D.C.



◀ Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj shakes hands with Secretary of State John Kerry during a meeting in New Delhi in 2016

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



◀ Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in 2017

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



◀ Secretary Antony J. Blinken and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar in July 2021

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

U.S.-INDIA 2+2 DIALOGUE SERIES, 2018 ONWARDS



▲ *Left to Right: Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper, Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo, Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar at the second annual U.S.-India '2+2' Ministerial Dialogue, New Delhi, 2020.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

TRADE POLICY FORUM RESUMED, 2021

The United States Trade Representative, Ambassador Katherine Tai meeting the Union Minister for Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles, Piyush Goyal, in New Delhi on November 22, 2021.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



AJAY BANGA

VICE CHAIRMAN, GENERAL ATLANTIC
FORMER CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MASTERCARD INC.

“The Indian diaspora in the United States has played a huge role in shaping this dynamic relationship between the two countries. Our shared values, deep friendship, and respective commitments to democracy have led us to where we are today. This book shows how those ties have grown throughout the years, and why we are so optimistic about what lies ahead in the coming decades!”

July 2022

GOVIND MOHAN

SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF CULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

“As India celebrates Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM), it is important to remember that 75 years is more than a milestone. It is testimony to how two countries, with very different histories, dissimilar geographies and unique economic stories have come to forge the robust partnership and become kindred spirits. It is my unequivocal belief that the edifice of this relationship lies in the profoundness of soft power, the bonhomie that the diaspora in both countries share for each other and as we celebrate the past 75 years, I am confident that we will continue to foster the strengths of this relationship as we approach mission 100.”

July 2022

05

SOFT POWER IN AN ERA OF HARD POWER

Harvard Academic Joseph Nye codified the term ‘soft power’, which refers to a country’s ability to influence and attract based on non-political means and institutions.

India’s reputation on the world stage as the world’s largest democracy has several alluring qualities. It is a multi-ethnic pluralistic country with roots in an ancient civilization that has been the birthplace of major religions of the non-Abrahamic faith. Its UNESCO World Heritage Sites, cuisine, culture, and cinema make it an aspiring model for global soft power.

This section showcases India’s soft power in the United States through Indian actors in Hollywood and a collection of cultural events across the U.S. – World Yoga Day, Diwali being celebrated in the White House, and the strength of the Indian student diaspora in the U.S.

HELEN KELLER, DISABILITY RIGHTS ACTIVIST VISITS INDIA, 1955

Born visually and hearing impaired, Keller was a disability rights activist. She traveled within and outside the United States, advocating for the visually impaired. Keller met with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in India in 1955 and addressed a gathering in New Delhi.

Disability Rights Activist Helen Keller with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in India, 1955.

Image Source : Getty Images



DUKE ELLINGTON HITS A HIGH NOTE IN INDIA, 1963

Noted jazz musician and composer Duke Ellington visited India in 1963. The baby boomers in India were coming into their own as young adults in the 1960s. Bombay (back then) had its own tryst with jazz music with live bands and dance performances. A vast migration of Goan Christians formally educated in music by the Portuguese moved to Bombay and formed jazz bands. Ellington was a hit with the crowds.



Duke Ellington talks to jazz fans during an engagement at the Triveni Kala Sangam in New Delhi, September 23, 1963

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



THE FIRST PATEL BROTHERS OPENED IN CHICAGO IN 1974

In 1974, two Gujarati brothers, Mafat and Tulsi Patel bought the then-only Indian grocery store in Chicago. Since then, Patel Brothers has transformed into the largest South Asian grocery chain across the United States with over 50 stores, selling everything that is quintessentially Indian (spices, rice and wheat). The corridor in Devon Street, Chicago, where the first store opened, was given the sobriquet of "Little India." Today, a weekend grocery run at a Patel Brothers is uniquely part of the South Asian diaspora experience in the U.S.



▼ A Patel Brothers store in a South Asian neighborhood on Chicago's Devon Avenue
Image Source: Alamy Images



SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON'S VISIT TO INDIA, 2009 AND 2011

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made several visits to India, including as First Lady. However, her agenda was not all diplomacy and dossiers; she found time to partake in India's cultural smorgasbord. She was asked what makes her visit India so often. She answered, "I am attracted to India. This is my fourth trip. There is something about the dynamism, the dedication to democracy, the commitment... It is inspiring. I can't express the feelings in my heart that makes me very happy to be here... I love the food! It is a place where I feel comfortable."

▲ U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, third from right, watches a performance by the Indian classical dancers at Kalakshetra in Chennai, India, July 20, 2011.

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



▲ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at Dili Haat in 2009.

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY, 2014 ONWARDS

While the origins of this mind-body exercise for rejuvenation commenced close to 5,000 years ago, the idea of International Yoga Day was first proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 27, 2014, during his speech at the UN General Assembly. Later, a resolution to establish June 21 (Summer Solstice) as International Yoga Day was introduced by the Permanent Representative of India to the UN.



▶ *International Day of Yoga at the U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, 2015.*

Image Source: Alamy Images



DIWALI CELEBRATIONS AT THE WHITE HOUSE

In 2009, former President Barack Obama lit the ceremonial lamp in the East Room of the White House and hosted a Diwali celebration. Since then, his successors, President Donald Trump and President Joe Biden, have lit the ceremonial diya and celebrated the Festival of Lights.

TIM ROEMER

U.S. AMBASSADOR TO INDIA, 2009-2011

“We The People’ captures both the start of our respective constitutions and our vibrant cultural ties. From celebrating Diwali to watching Bollywood movies to sharing affection for democracy, the Indian Diaspora in America creates strong bonds of friendship and partnership. Our soft power ties help make this the most vital relationship of the 21st century.”

July 2022

★ *President Donald J. Trump participates in a ceremonial Diwali lighting of the Diya in the Roosevelt Room at the White House on November 13, 2018, in Washington, D.C.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

▲ *President Barack Obama lights an oil lamp during Diwali celebrations on October 14, 2009 in the East Room of the White House in Washington, D.C.*

Image Source: Alamy Images

▼ *President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden light a diya to celebrate Diwali on October 27, 2021, in the Blue Room of the White House.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

WHEN HOLLYWOOD MEETS BOLLYWOOD



▲ *Mr. C.V. Narasimhan, Under Secretary General for General Assembly Affairs, Mrs. Pearl S. Buck, Mr. and Mrs. Dev Anand*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

▲ *The two that made 'The Guide' - author Pearl Buck and actor-producer Dev Anand.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

▲ *Priyanka Chopra at the premiere of 'Isn't It Romantic' at Los Angeles*

Image Source: Shutterstock Images

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Image Source:



NBA DRIBBLES IT'S WAY INTO INDIA

The National Basketball Association (NBA) made its appearance in Mumbai in 2019 for its first-ever pre-season games in India.

▲ *Image Source: U.S.Embassy, India*





FOOD FOR THOUGHT: PRESIDENT CLINTON'S FAVORITE RESTAURANT WAS THE BOMBAY CLUB IN DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Former President Bill Clinton and then-First Lady Hillary Clinton frequently visited the iconic Indian restaurant, The Bombay Club, which was a stone's throw distance from the White House. This Michelin-Star establishment is owned by Delhi-born restaurateur Ashok Bajaj, founder of the Knightsbridge Restaurant Group (which also owns Rasika and Bindaas). President Bill Clinton even cited an anecdote about visiting The Bombay Club, in his autobiography 'My Life.'

President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton leave The Bombay Club restaurant

Image Source: Getty Images

AMERICA WAS ONCE A CRICKET COUNTRY

At first glance, cricket and America seem incongruous. Despite it originating in the West, steeped in British antiquity, it would seem the sport never moved West and was rather adopted and adapted to South Asian roots. While baseball is America's national sport, cricket was once its national pastime. Cricket predates baseball and was once the national game of the United States of America, even though officially, it isn't even the national sport in cricket-crazy India.



◀ *A cricket match taking place in Phoenix Arizona*

Image Source: Alamy Images



ACTOR ANIL KAPOOR AT ROOSEVELT HOUSE, NEW DELHI, 2012

The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi hosted a reception to honor the memory and inaugurate the bust of Eleanor Roosevelt, the founder of UNICEF. Renowned Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor was among the invitees. Mrs. Roosevelt had visited India at the invitation of Prime Minister Nehru back in the 1950s.

▲ *Actor Anil Kapoor at the Eleanor Roosevelt Dedication Ceremony in New Delhi, 2012*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

DURGA DANCE PERFORMANCE IN NEW YORK, 1992

In 1992, choreographer Jonathan Hollander received a Fulbright Grant to research, teach, and perform in India. Nearly three decades later, the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi hosted the Panipat-based company to present 'The Durga Project' in India. This work exemplifies the result of Hollander's immersion in Indian culture that has been made possible by U.S. Exchanges. 'The Durga Project' in New York marked the 40th anniversary of the Battery Dance Company in 2016.

▼ *The Durga Project at New York's Battery Dance Festival with Indian classical dancer Unnath HR and dancers of Battery Dance.*

Source: U.S. Embassy, India



BATTERY DANCE COMPANY PERFORMANCE IN INDIA, 2018

New York-based Battery Dance company held a performance in New Delhi titled 'Shakti: A Return to the Source,' in partnership with the State Department and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). Directed by choreographer Jonathan Hollander, co-founder of the Indo-American Arts Council, the performance featured an eclectic mix of American dancers of Battery Dance and Indian classical dancer Unnath Hassan Rathnaraju.



*Battery Dance Company
performs in New Delhi, 2018.*

Source: U.S. Embassy, India



LIVING DREAM CONCERT, 2009

The Living Dream Concert took place at the National Center for Performing Arts (NCPA), Tata Theater in Mumbai, on February 18, 2009. The series of music performances were part of the countrywide event commemorating the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his wife Coretta Scott King's 1959 tour of India.

▼ *Martin Luther King III on stage with actor Kamal Haasan and members of A.R. Rahman's K.M. Music Conservatory, Chennai on February 25, 2009.*

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India

ZAKIR HUSSAIN IN THE U.S.

Music was always in his genes. The family was already famous, but Zakir Hussain immortalized their legacy. Dubbed the Tabla Maestro, Ustad Zakir Hussain is arguably the most famous Tabla player in the country in the post-independence era. Son of the late Ustad Allah Rakha, Zakir was a child prodigy and inclined towards the instrument at a young age. Having established himself early on, he collaborated with western musicians and worked closely with American bands.

Zakir Hussain on tablas performs a Sangam at the Monterey Jazz Festival on 19 September, 2014.

Image Source: Alamy Images



THE FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP PROMOTES EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN AMERICAN AND INDIAN STUDENTS

They came for education and stayed for employment. The Indian-American community is well established as one of the wealthiest and most educated immigrants in the country. The success of the diaspora at the highest echelons of the private sector in the U.S. is often a product of the higher education received in the country.

Across campuses at various graduate levels, Indian students account for 18% of all international students in the U.S., second only to China (35%). Fulbright Scholarship in India was established in February 1950 under a bilateral agreement known as the Nehru-Fulbright.



^ *The Fulbright Commission in India was established in February 1950 under a bilateral agreement. Known as the Nehru-Fulbright Scholarship, it promotes educational exchange between U.S. and Indian students.*

Image Source: Fulbright Commission

RENU KHATOR

PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

“Higher education is the backbone of a strong society, and global partnerships are the lifeblood of a better world. There is power in partnership, and the U.S.-India relationship amplifies these truths. Our intellectual collaboration has ignited economic growth, technological advancements and scientific breakthroughs that have driven social mobility and life-changing innovations for each country’s citizens.”

July 2022

PRADEEP K. KHOSLA

CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

“Higher education has a long history of training and convening thought leaders from India and the U.S. to identify, explore and address a range of issues such as economic development, public policy and climate change. Research collaborations between our two countries have improved global health, advanced technologies, generated prosperity and sparked creative solutions to pressing global challenges. Through these efforts, higher education has been instrumental in improving U.S.-India strategic relations. Now, more than ever, we must deepen our university partnerships and connections to ensure a brighter future for India, America and our planet.”

July 2022

ICONIC MAHATMA GANDHI STATUE OUTSIDE THE INDIAN EMBASSY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Statues and busts of Mahatma Gandhi aren't rare and are found all over the United States. However, this iconic bronze statue of the Father of the Nation is a landmark statue that serves as a marker for the Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C. The statue depicts Mahatma Gandhi in his quintessential ascetic garb, a reference to the famous 1930 Dandi March. The statue was dedicated by the late Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President Bill Clinton on September 16, 2000, during Prime Minister Vajpayee's state visit to the United States.



▶ Prime Minister Narendra Modi honors the statue of Mahatma Gandhi outside the Indian Embassy in Washington D.C. House in September 2014.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



THE ORIGINS OF PAV BHAJI HAVE AN AMERICAN CONNECTION

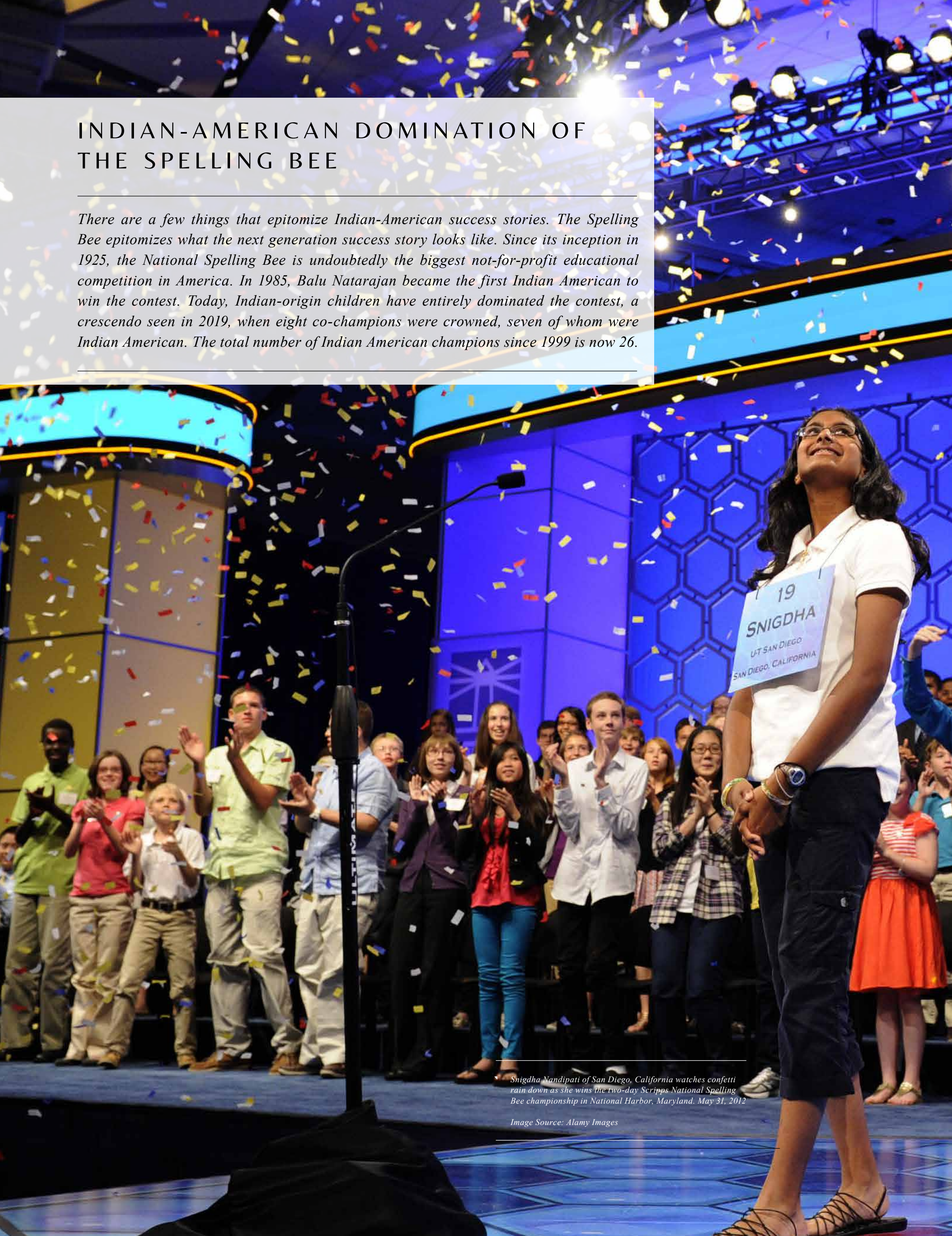
There are few dishes as ubiquitous to Mumbai and street food in India as Pav Bhaji. Pav Bhaji was a funny result of the U.S. Civil War in the 1860s. The Civil War brought about a huge demand for cotton. Due to this, the traders at the Bombay Cotton Exchange used to keep busy during the night when new cotton rates were sent via telegram from the U.S. The odd hours of working through the night meant street vendors had to find a way to rummage leftovers and prepare a proper meal. Rotis couldn't be made fresh, and not all vegetables were available in the wee hours of the morning. To solve this conundrum, street vendors collected the leftover bread from the Jesuit priests and mixed all the vegetables, mashed them together, and served them to eat with bread and butter. Thus pav (bread) and bhaji (vegetables) was born.

▸ *A visitor purchases Indian food at a Diwali street fair in the Queens neighborhood of Jackson Heights in New York. 14 October 2012*

Image Source: Alamy Images

INDIAN-AMERICAN DOMINATION OF THE SPELLING BEE

There are a few things that epitomize Indian-American success stories. The Spelling Bee epitomizes what the next generation success story looks like. Since its inception in 1925, the National Spelling Bee is undoubtedly the biggest not-for-profit educational competition in America. In 1985, Balu Natarajan became the first Indian American to win the contest. Today, Indian-origin children have entirely dominated the contest, a crescendo seen in 2019, when eight co-champions were crowned, seven of whom were Indian American. The total number of Indian American champions since 1999 is now 26.



Snigdha Nandipati of San Diego, California watches confetti rain down as she wins the two-day Scripps National Spelling Bee championship in National Harbor, Maryland, May 31, 2012

Image Source: Alamy Images

PROF C. RAJA MOHAN

ASIA SOCIETY POLICY INSTITUTE, NEW DELHI

“If Delhi and Washington struggled to build productive bilateral relations in the early decades of India’s independence, the two nations have emerged as strategic partners in the twenty-first century. This surprising transformation was rooted in the growing contact between the two civil societies in the second half of the twentieth century. While converging interests—economic, political, and military— have given great momentum, it is the rapid expansion of people-to-people ties since the turn of the millennium that generated the necessary trust and confidence between the two governments. The interpenetration of the two societies is likely to get deeper in the next twenty-five years and turn India and the United States into enduring and indispensable partners for each other.”

July 2022

MEERA SHANKAR

AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO THE UNITED STATES, 2009 -2011

“The India - U.S. Strategic Partnership grows stronger propelled by both our shared democratic values and our increasingly convergent interests in Asia. It is nourished by the close contacts between our people. Indian Americans are making outstanding contributions to public life, innovation and entrepreneurship in America. They are a bridge which brings our countries closer.”

July 2022

06

HOLDING THE FLOOR

This chapter showcases historic photographs of Indian Prime Ministers addressing the U.S. Congress and U.S. Presidents addressing the Indian Parliament.



PRIME MINISTER NEHRU'S ADDRESS, 1949

“Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru addressed both the House of Representatives and the Senate, albeit separately, during his first visit to the United States. He addressed a House Reception on October 13, 1949. The House Chamber was under renovation at that time, so the reception was held in the Ways and Means Committee room in the New House Office Building. Prime Minister Nehru’s address lasted for 15 minutes, where he touched on the similarities between both countries.” He later delivered the same address to the Senate (then in the Old Supreme Court Chamber).”

^ Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru addresses the U.S. House of Representatives. October 13, 1949

Image Source : U.S. Embassy, India



PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S ADDRESS, 1959

President Eisenhower was the first U.S. President to visit India. He delivered a public speech at Delhi's Ramlila ground. Ike, as he was known, addressed members of both Houses of Parliament. President Eisenhower's address was received with rapturous applause as President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Nehru touched upon the future of the "East-West relationship."

^ *President Eisenhower with Prime Minister Nehru and President Radhakrishnan*

Image Source: Alamy Images

PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER'S ADDRESS, 1978

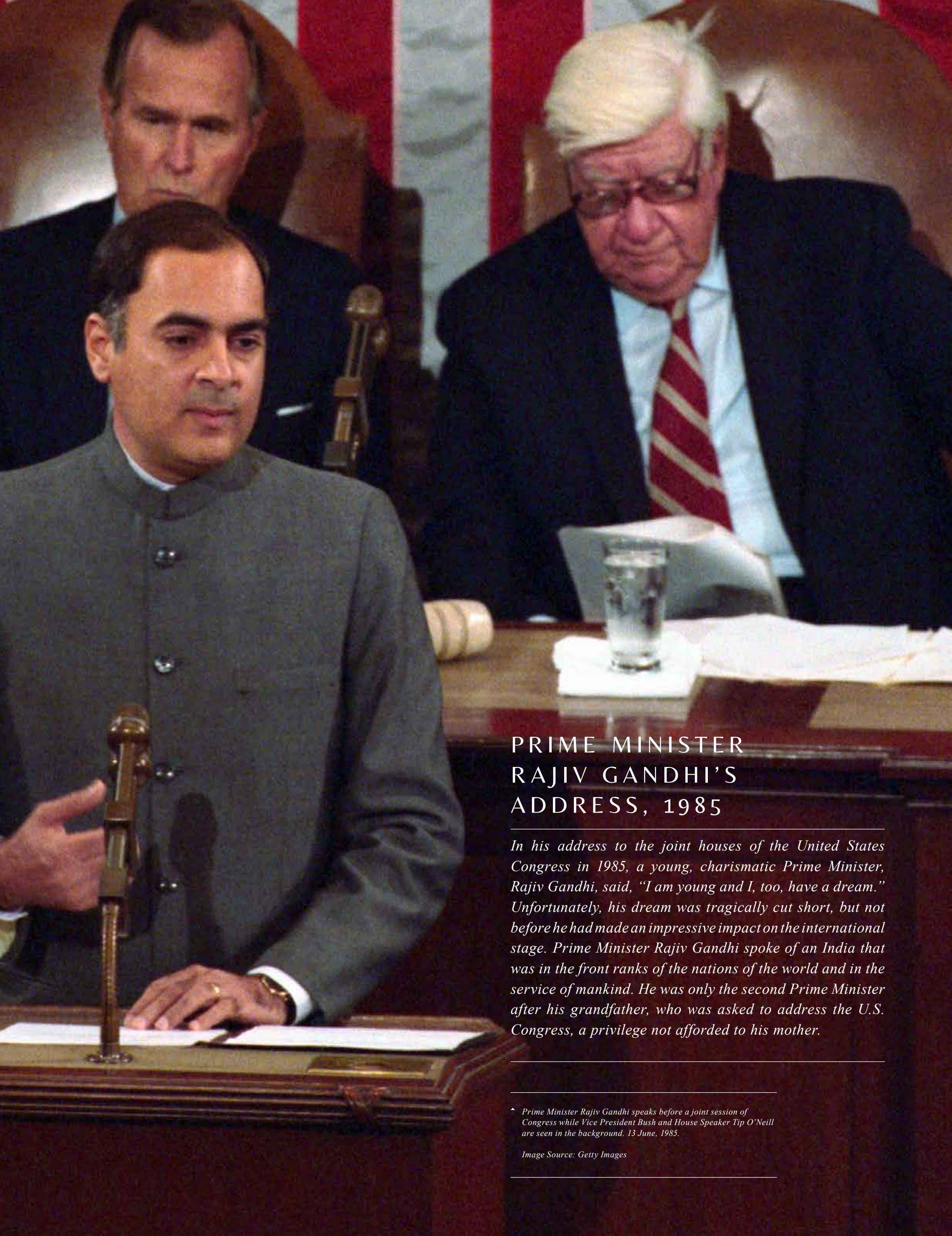
President Jimmy Carter addressed Indian Parliament as President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy and Prime Minister Morarji Desai greeted him. He touched on feelings of profound friendship, respect, and good wishes between the people of the second-largest democracy on earth, the United States of America, to the people of the largest democracy, India.

President Carter commended both countries for their shining democratic values, respect for the rule of law, and a peaceful transfer of power through every election, referencing the elections of 1977.

Prime Minister Morarji Desai listens to President Carter as he addresses the Indian Parliament House. 2 January, 1978.

Image Source: Alamy Images





PRIME MINISTER RAJIV GANDHI'S ADDRESS, 1985

In his address to the joint houses of the United States Congress in 1985, a young, charismatic Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, said, "I am young and I, too, have a dream." Unfortunately, his dream was tragically cut short, but not before he had made an impressive impact on the international stage. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi spoke of an India that was in the front ranks of the nations of the world and in the service of mankind. He was only the second Prime Minister after his grandfather, who was asked to address the U.S. Congress, a privilege not afforded to his mother.

[^] Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi speaks before a joint session of Congress while Vice President Bush and House Speaker Tip O'Neill are seen in the background. 13 June, 1985.



PRIME MINISTER P.V. NARASIMHA RAO'S ADDRESS, 1994

When Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao took the floor in 1994, the Soviet Union had collapsed, the Cold War had ended, and India had unveiled a radical program of new economic reforms. Prime Minister Rao spoke of the need to look to the future without the baggage of the past, a phrase alluding to “hesitations of history” that both Prime Minister Vajpayee and Prime Minister Modi would reference in the future speeches. President Bill Clinton was in his first term when Prime Minister Rao visited. The visiting Prime Minister said, “Indo-U.S. relations are on the threshold of a bold, new era.”

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao addressing the Joint meeting of the U.S. Congress in Washington D.C. May 18, 1994

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON'S ADDRESS, 2000

President Bill Clinton's charisma and engaging demeanor had won him many admirers in India's Parliament. He received rapturous applause in both houses of Parliament as he praised India's democratic values and emphasis on health care and education.

In the aftermath of the Kargil War, his impassioned plea to India's Parliament was to retreat from the nation's growing nuclear weapons program and reach out to Pakistan. President Clinton urged for greater environmental cooperation between India and the United States.

^ President Bill Clinton addresses the Indian Parliament in New Delhi. March 22, 2000.

Image Source: Getty Images

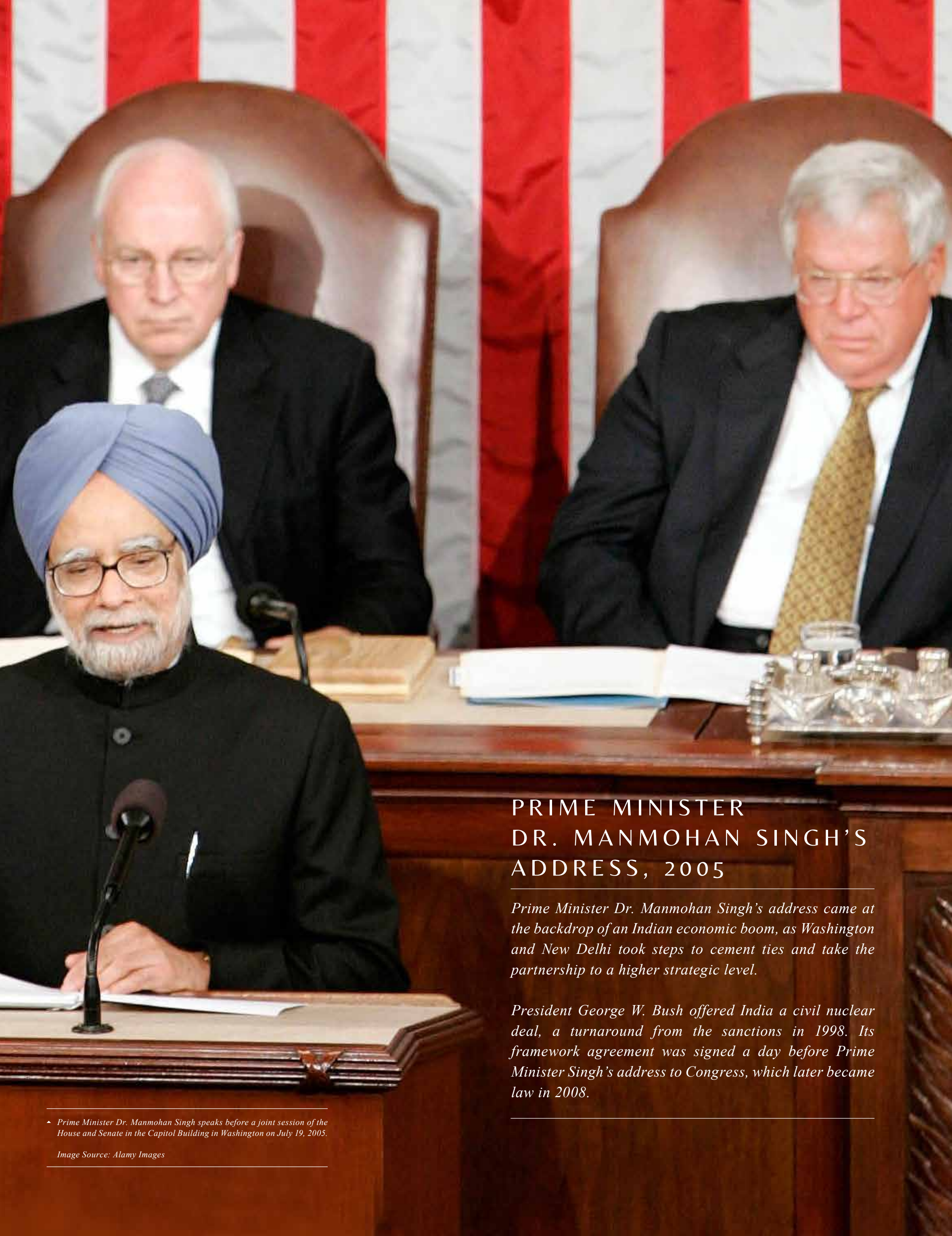


PRIME MINISTER ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE'S ADDRESS, 2000

Prime Minister Vajpayee was the second Prime Minister to address the House under the Clinton presidency. Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit was against the backdrop of India's nuclear test in 1998, Kargil war in 1999 and India's booming IT industry. Prime Minister Vajpayee spoke of a prosperous India and one that is in partnership with the U.S.. "Let's Remove The Hesitation" was the theme that resonated from his address.

▲ *Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee addresses a joint session of the U.S. Congress at the U.S. Capitol, 14 September, 2000.*

Image Source: Getty Images



PRIME MINISTER DR. MANMOHAN SINGH'S ADDRESS, 2005

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's address came at the backdrop of an Indian economic boom, as Washington and New Delhi took steps to cement ties and take the partnership to a higher strategic level.

President George W. Bush offered India a civil nuclear deal, a turnaround from the sanctions in 1998. Its framework agreement was signed a day before Prime Minister Singh's address to Congress, which later became law in 2008.

▲ Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh speaks before a joint session of the House and Senate in the Capitol Building in Washington on July 19, 2005.

Image Source: Alamy Images

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S ADDRESS, 2010

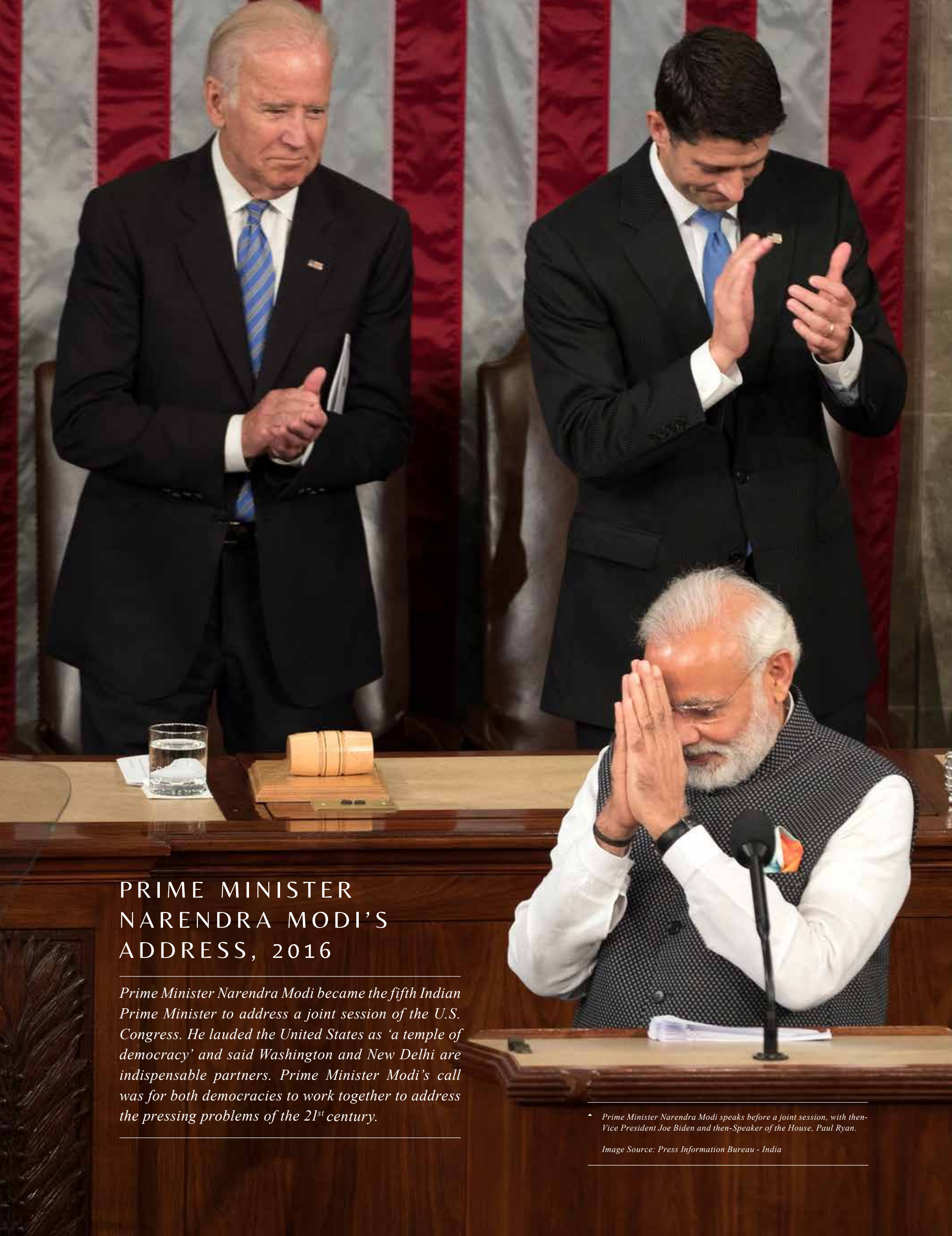
President Barack Obama addressed a joint session in the Indian Parliament and espoused a grand vision for the U.S.-India relationship.

President Obama received thunderous applause when he spoke about the terrorists responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attacks and spoke about bringing the perpetrators to justice. President Obama touched on the hope of India becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council and India playing a global role in the Asia-Pacific region, which would soon be codified as Indo-Pacific and would shape the Quad.

◀ *President Barack Obama was the fourth U.S. President to address the House after Dwight Eisenhower, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton*

Image Source: Alamy Images





PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S ADDRESS, 2016

Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the fifth Indian Prime Minister to address a joint session of the U.S. Congress. He lauded the United States as 'a temple of democracy' and said Washington and New Delhi are indispensable partners. Prime Minister Modi's call was for both democracies to work together to address the pressing problems of the 21st century.

^ Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks before a joint session, with then-Vice President Joe Biden and then-Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India

MARSHALL M. BOUTON

PRESIDENT EMERITUS, THE CHICAGO COUNCIL ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS
FORMER SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE AMBASSADOR, U.S. EMBASSY, NEW DELHI

“Throughout my sixty-year involvement with India in scholarship, government service and nonprofit leadership, I have been deeply attracted by its effort to accommodate enormous religious, ethnic and linguistic diversity. India’s democracy, so vibrant and inclusive, is what has made this historic experiment in nation-building possible. India’s cultural openness and depth comes through the daily habit of tolerance among ordinary Indians. Admiration for India’s values and practices has undergirded its growing relationship with the United States and role in the international community. India’s unique civilizational gift to the world remains its ability to meld its diverse peoples into a nation based on tolerance and mutual respect.”

July 2022

07

WAH TAJ

This chapter showcases U.S. Presidents and First Ladies visiting the iconic Taj Mahal in Agra. The Seventh Wonder of the World is an iconic landmark that has mesmerized architects, photographers, cinematographers, historians, artists, poets, writers, and anyone who gazes at its beauty. It has been studied historically and architecturally, featured in countless films and documentaries, and is one of the most photographed sites in the world.

This UNESCO world heritage site is on top of the itinerary of all those visiting India. Surely, Heads of State and U.S. Presidents are equally taken aback by this 17th century Mughal marvel.

Three Presidents have visited the Taj on formal state visits. It began with Dwight Eisenhower in 1959, followed by Bill Clinton in 2000, and most recently, Donald Trump in 2020.

However, although not on state visits, several other Presidents and First Ladies have visited the Taj. The notable absentees were Barack and Michelle Obama, who were scheduled to visit Agra, but cut their trip short as they flew to Saudi Arabia to pay condolences to the Royal family following the death of King Abdullah.



▲ *Vice President Richard Nixon & Second Lady Pat Nixon, 1953*

Image Source : U.S. Embassy, India

◀ *A visit to the Taj Mahal proved to be an inspiration for President Eisenhower and daughter-in-law Barbara during a tour conducted by Prime Minister Nehru. 13 Dec, 1959*

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



▲ Vice President Lyndon Johnson and Second Lady Johnson at the Taj Mahal, 1961
Image source: U.S. Embassy, India

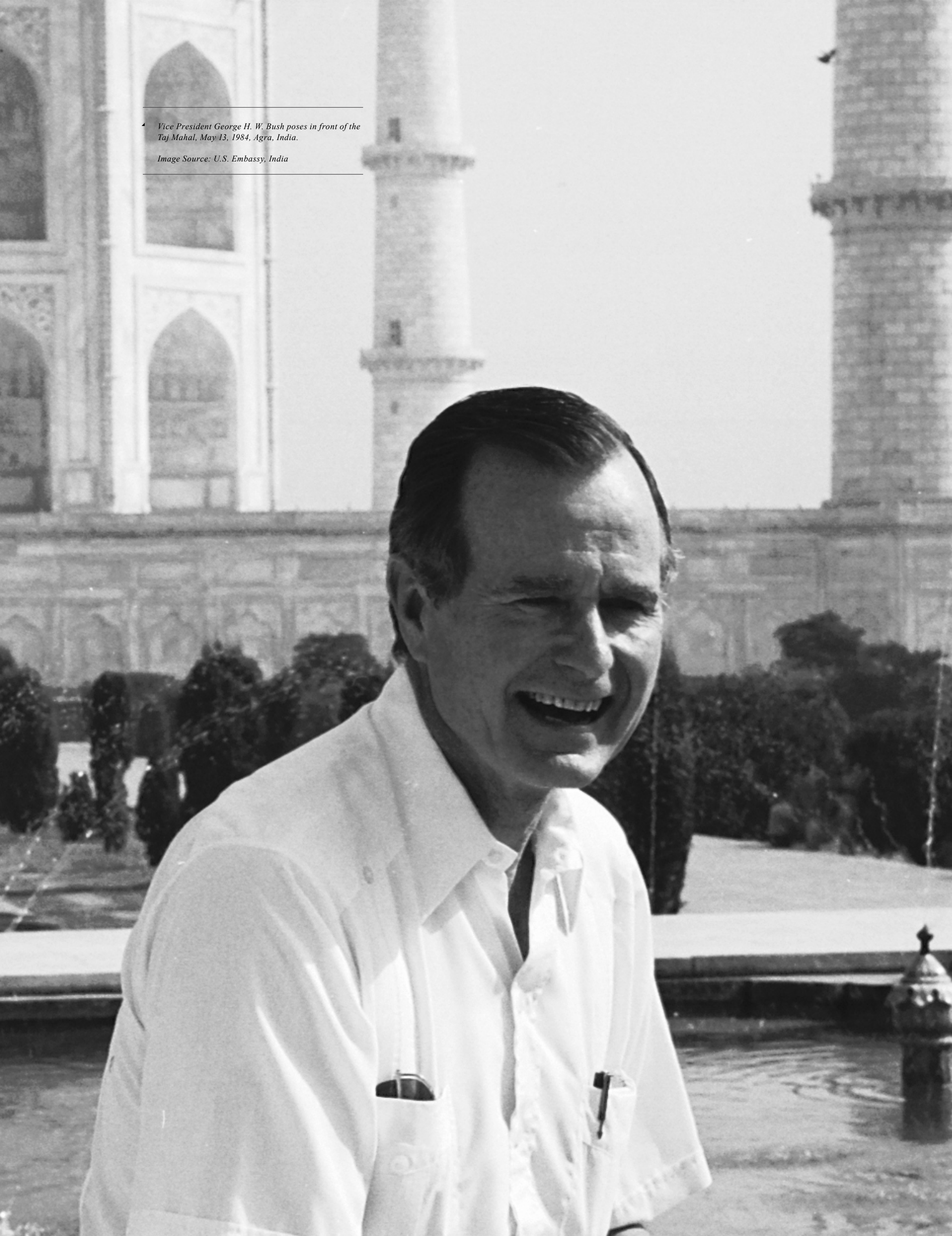
First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, wife of the U.S. President, visited Agra. U.S. Ambassador in India Gallbraith can be seen in picture. March 15, 1962.

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



Vice President George H. W. Bush poses in front of the Taj Mahal, May 13, 1984, Agra, India.

Image Source: U.S. Embassy, India



▼ *President Clinton and his daughter
Chelsea Clinton sit on the north bench in
front of the Taj Mahal. March 22, 2000*

Image Source: Alamy Images



President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump

Image Source: Press Information Bureau - India



SPECIAL THANKS TO



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"We The People" is a project that seeks to celebrate and recognize the special partnership between the world's oldest and largest democracies and the diaspora in both lands. We have tried our best to look through history to capture the iconic and seminal moments and to showcase the leaders and stalwarts who played a part in cementing this strategic partnership and scaling it to new heights.

Our goal was to use the power of portraits to tell the story of how the strategic partnership between India and the United States has evolved, from the humble beginnings of the first American consulate in Kolkata that opened in the 18th century to becoming the defining partnership of the 21st century.

But most importantly, our focus was to accentuate the role of the individuals in this story. Democracies are for the people, by the people, and of the people. And hence, to tell our story, the story of "We The People", we start at the very beginning and acknowledge the assiduous efforts of all those who have helped make this book possible.

We are indebted to the many diplomats, captains of industry, and academic scholars who captured the essence of their experience in the relationship in a few lines through exclusive quotes you will see throughout this book.

To Dr. Arvind Panagariya, economist and academic stalwart, whose initial insights helped give the book a direction.

To Ambassador Navtej Sarna, who guided us through the course of the events in this 75-year story and so kindly dedicated his time to give us historical context.

We are deeply indebted to Mr. Prasenjit. K. Basu, our lead historian, whose historical insights, and perspicacity helped guide our content. We thank him for his time and excellent repository of ideas.

We sincerely thank Dr. Ashley J. Tellis for his review of this 75-year journey, in which he so crucially played a part.

Our deepest gratitude to Mr. Govind Mohan, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, and Press Information Bureau (PIB), Government of India.

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We would like to thank Jay Mandal for the time he lent to the project.

Thank you to the team at Design Answers who have played their part in the creative and artistic touch of converting texts, ideas, and images into this iconic product that you so proudly hold in your hand.

Last but not least, the efforts of my USISPF colleagues, Mr. Akshobh Giridharadas, Ms. Shireen Singh, Ms. Lalitambika Kumari, Ms. Shruti Nagpal, Ms. Vishaka Hussain Pathak, Ms. Nivedita Mehra & Mr. Gaurav Verma. Their prodigious work has helped fructify this colossal endeavor of chronicling over 75 years of dynamic partnership. I sincerely thank them for bringing the "We The People" project from an idea to a proud piece of literature with historical significance.



Dr. Mukesh Aghi
President & CEO
U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum



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STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FORUM

STRENGTHENING THE BILATERAL PARTNERSHIP