Joe Biden & Indian PM Narendra Modi Meeting Press Briefing

President Joe Biden and Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi met at the White House.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden.

President Joe Biden: Well, welcome. I want to welcome my friend, and we've known each other for some time, back to the White House. And Mr. Prime Minister,

we’re going to continue to build on our strong partnership. When I showed the Prime Minister to his seat, I pointed out that the seat is occupied almost every day by an Indian American. The Vice President’s mother was from India, a scientist, and a remarkable woman. As I think you know, Mr. Prime Minister, I’ve long believed that the U.S.India relationship can help us solve an awful lot of global challenges.

And in fact, back in 2006, I set that hope out where I said that by 2020, when I was Vice President, 2020, India and the United States would be among the closest nations in the world with one another. And maybe I shouldn’t… These are not part of my prepared Joe Biden & Indian PM Narendra Modi Meeting Press Briefing President Joe Biden and Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi met at the White House. remarks, but when I was in Mumbai as Vice President, I finished meeting with the equivalent of the Chamber of Commerce.

And afterwards the Indian press asked me, do I have any relatives in India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi: Yes.

P**resident Joe Biden:** And I said, “I’m not sure,” but when I was elected as a 29-year-old kid in 1972, before I was sworn in, I got a letter from a person named Biden, last name, from Mumbai.

And I said, “Well, I never was able to follow up.” Next morning, I had a press conference going away and the Indian press said… Someone spoke and said, “You have five Bidens in India.”

And although we never admitted it, jokingly, I found out that there was a Captain George Biden, who was a captain in the East India Tea Company.

That’s hard for an Irish man to admit. I shouldn’t be so casual with you all but I hope you understand the humor here, but… And the end result was that he apparently stayed and married an Indian woman, and I’ve never been able to track it down. So the whole purpose of this meeting is for him to help me figure out. But all kidding aside, I think that the relationship between India and the United States, the largest democracies in the world, is destined to be stronger, closer and tighter. And I think it can benefit the whole world.

And I think that’s begun to come to pass, and today we’re launching a new chapter in the history of the U.S.- India ties and taking on some of the toughest challenges

we face together, starting with a shared commitment to ending the COVID pandemic. The Prime Minister and I are going to be talking today about what more we can do to fight COVID-19, take on the climate challenges that the world face and ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific, including with our own Quad partners.

Of course, our partnership is more than just what we do. It's about who we are. It's rooted in our shared responsibility to pull democratic values, our joint commitment to diversity, and it's about family ties, including four million, four million Indian Americans who make the United States stronger every single day. As the world celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's birthday next week, we're all reminded that his message of non-violence, respect, tolerance, matters today maybe more than it ever has. So I'm looking forward to my discussions with the Prime Minister and thank you.

Primer Minister, the floor is yours.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi: Thank you.

First of all, Mr. President, I would like to express my gratitude for this very warm welcome, full of friendship, not only to me, but to my delegation.

Mr. President in 2016, and even before that, in 2014, we had an opportunity to have discussions in detail. And at that time, Mr. President, you had laid out your vision for the relations between India and the United States, and you have enunciated that in great detail, and really that was a vision that was inspirational. And today, Mr. President, as president, you are making all efforts and taking initiatives to implement that vision and I warmly welcome that.

Mr. President, you have today spoken in detail about the Biden surname in India and in fact, you had mentioned that to me earlier, too. Well, after you mentioned it to me, I hunted for documents and today I have brought along some documents. Maybe we'll be able to take this matter forward and maybe those documents could be of use to you.

President Joe Biden: We're related?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi: Yes.

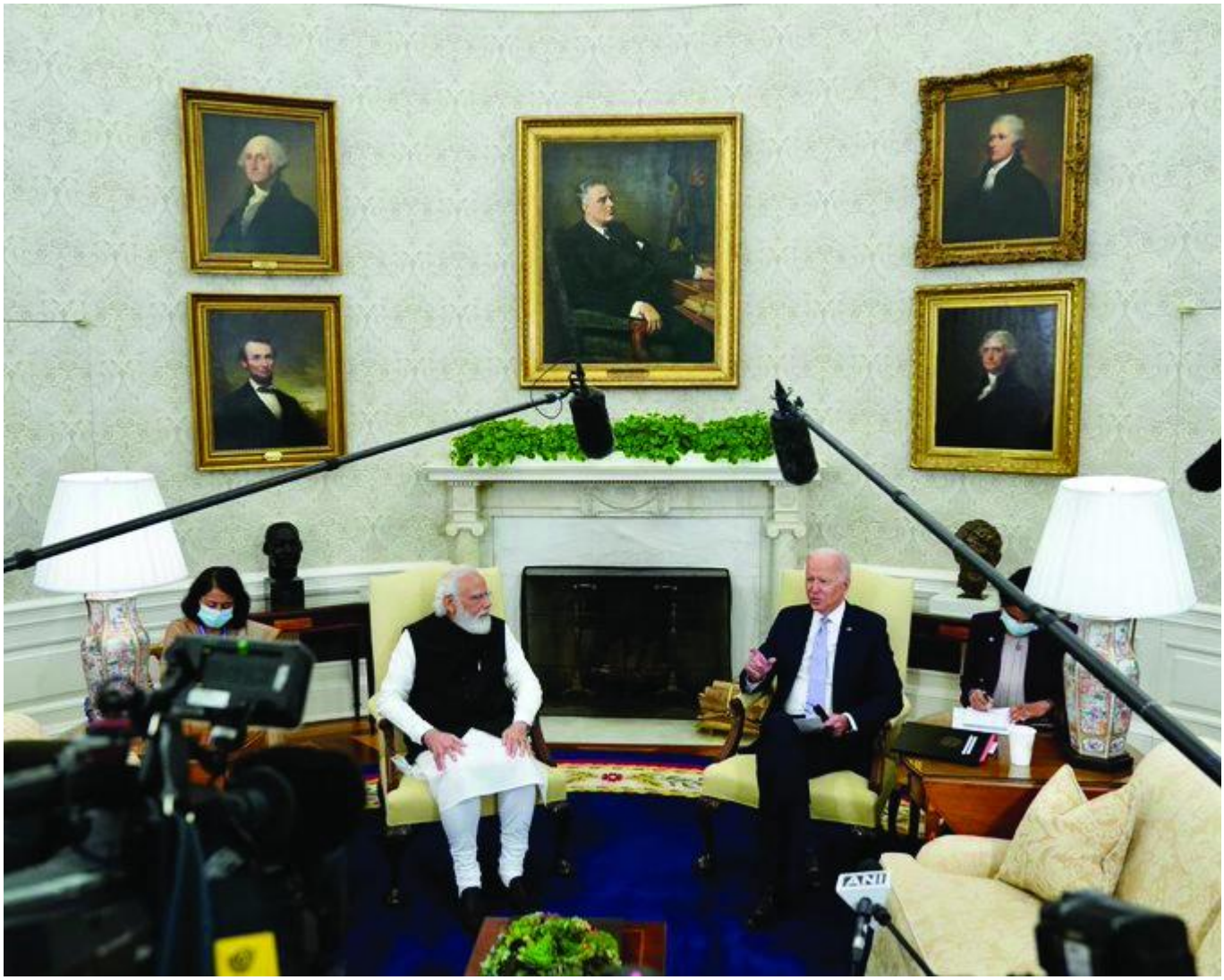
Mr. President, I firmly believe back in our summit talks and summit meetings today what I see is that this is the third decade of the 21st century, this is the first year of

the third decade, and I see that when I look at the entire decade. I find that under your leadership, the seeds have been sown for the Indo-U.S. relations to expand. And for all democratic countries in the world, this is going to be a transformative period. I can see that very clearly.

And this is when I see that this transformative period is in Indo-U.S. relations. And when I talk about traditions, I'm talking about democratic traditions, democratic values, traditions to which both countries are committed. And I find that the importance of these traditions will only increase further.

In a similar vein, Mr. President, you mentioned the more than four million Indian Americans who are participating in the journey of progress of America. And when I look at the importance of this decade and the role that is going to be played by this talent of Indian Americans, I find that these people to people talent will play a greater role, and Indian talent will be a full partner in this relationship. And I see that your contribution is going to be very important in this.

Mr. President, in similar lines, the most important driving poles in the world today would be that of technology and the technology that is going to be for the service and for the use of humanity. And I find that opportunities for this are going to be tremendous. Similarly, Mr. President, between India and the United States, trade will continue to assume importance. And we find that the trade between our two countries are actually complimentary. There are things that you have and there are things that we have, and then we in fact compliment each other. And I find that in the area of trade during this decade, that is also going to be tremendously important.



Mr. President, you just mentioned that the celebration of birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, and Mahatma Gandhi always used to talk about the principle of trusteeship, trusteeship of the planet. And this decade, Mr. President, from that point of view, is also going to be important as this entire principle of trusteeship, it means that the planet that we have, we have to bequeath it to the following generations. And this sentiment of trusteeship is going to assume more and more importance globally, but also between the relations between India and the United States. And it is these ideals that Mahatma Gandhi has passed where he talked about trusteeship of the planet and where the responsibility of global citizens is only going to go up. Mr. President, you mentioned very important issues, and after assuming charge as President of the United States you have taken very unique initiatives, whether that be COVID-19, climate change, or even Quad. And in the

days after that, after taking this initiative, you have made and deployed great efforts to bring them to implement your vision. And also today, we have this opportunity to discuss all these issues in great detail, how and after our discussions we will look towards how we can work further together, not only for our respective countries, but for the entire world, how we can take positive action. And I'm absolutely convinced that under your leadership, whatever we do, it will be extremely relevant for the entire world.

Once again, Mr. President, let me thank you profusely for this very warm welcome.

President Joe Biden: Thank you. Prime Minister Narendra Modi: Thank you.

President Joe Biden: Thank you, everyone.