



The Biden Administration Hopes and Aspirations for Indo-U.S. Relations

3rd Edition

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The U.S. and India being the oldest and largest democracies respectively, the future of their bilateral relations will depend upon how the Biden administration can carry forward the legacy of its Democratic and Republican predecessors in deepening the relationship. Having a track record of steering the Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal and worked with the President Obama in taking the relationships to the higher levels, there remains hopes and aspirations for greater partnerships, not just between the two countries, but for ensuring a rules-based Indo-Pacific which is 'the' imperative for a balanced global order for underlining peace, security, stability and prosperity. This third edition of the ONW continues to reflect upon the opinions and suggestions from various experts and intellectuals, along with the new developments.

| News/Op-ed | Key Takeaway |
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| <p>Biden Admin Will Prioritise India – Ties to Be Deeper Than Ever The Quint January 31, 2021</p> | <p>Apart from India's economy, shared democratic values was also a factor that favoured U.S. support for closer ties with India, in their intersecting rivalry with China. The world has perceived India as a large, pluralistic, democratic nation, which did not need a strong state to hold it together. Commitment to democratic values has been seen in statements of new political appointees in the Biden administration, and will continue to be an important element of U.S. foreign policy.</p> |
| <p>Joe Biden administration committed to strong U.S.-India bilateral relationship: Pentagon India Today January 29, 2021</p> | <p>The Joe Biden administration is going to remain committed to a strong bilateral relationship with India, the Pentagon has said, a day after U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke for the first time with Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. "The Secretary made it very clear that we're going to remain committed to a strong U.S.-India bilateral relationship," Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby told reporters at a news conference in Washington on Thursday, 28th January.</p> |

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| <p>Pledge to boost defence ties as Biden admin dials Delhi The Times of India January 28, 2021</p> | <p>The new Biden administration has started making its first contact with Indian counterparts. On Wednesday, 27th January, National security adviser Ajit Doval spoke to his counterpart Jake Sullivan and defence minister Rajnath Singh with the U.S. defence secretary Gen Lloyd Austin. Both conversations reaffirmed the commitment to expand an already growing defence and security cooperation. Defence minister Rajnath Singh said he and his U.S. counterpart Lloyd J Austin, in a telephonic conversation on Wednesday evening, “exchanged views on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest to strengthen our strategic partnership”.</p> |
| <p>How will Biden administration impact U.S.-India trade relations, metals tariffs? Metal Miner January 28, 2021</p> | <p>Much of the hope for better U.S.-India relations focuses on the desire that the U.S. will focus more on its bilateral ties with India because of the former’s strained relation with China, and why the U.S. would benefit from such a move. China will be on the new U.S. administration’s mind as it assesses the Indo-U.S. trade relationship. For now, though, the Biden administration has made it clear it would not considering any new free trade deals. Furthermore, it’s unclear whether the Biden administration will maintain or rescind existing Section 232 steel and aluminum tariffs.</p> |
| <p>"Indian-Americans Critical Pillar For Ties With U.S.": Envoy On Working With Biden Administration NDTV January 27, 2021</p> | <p>India-U.S. partnership is built on the foundation of shared values and they are looking forward to working with the Biden administration, said Indian Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu in his Republic Day address on Tuesday, 26th January. “In all of this, the Indian-American community is a critical pillar of our relationship with the U.S.,” Mr. Sandhu said, adding that he is confident that the community will continue to play its important role in bringing the two nations closer.</p> |
| <p>India-U.S. ties: 5 key recommendations of USIBC to Joe Biden administration Money Control January 26, 2021</p> | <p>The US-India Business Council (USIBC) on January 26, gave a slew of big ideas to the new Biden Administration to strengthen the India-U.S. partnership. This covered a number of issues ranging from reconstituting business relations with India as well as creating a new digital partnership under the headship of Vice President Kamala Harris.</p> |
| <p>Trump to Biden: Modi’s U.S. ties in need of reset <i>By Sanjaya Baru</i> Deccan Chronicle January 25, 2021</p> | <p>The India-U.S. relationship has waxed and waned depending on how this mix between values, defined by principles, and interests, based on pragmatism, has worked out. As a new administration with a very different and well-defined ideological orientation takes charge in Washington D.C., diplomats and observers in both countries will wait to see what kind of a balance would be struck between the two considerations in taking the India-U.S. relationship forward.</p> |

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| <p>Will Biden Seize the Opportunity for an Alliance With India? <i>By Brahma Chellaney</i> World Politics Review January 25, 2021</p> | <p>Today, the United States is close to accomplishing what it has long struggled to achieve: co-opting India in a “soft alliance” built not on formal security obligations but on common interests. U.S. officials recognize that such an arrangement will bear little resemblance to the patron-client framework that was established in Asia during the Cold War, with Washington as the “hub” and treaty allies like Japan, South Korea and Australia as the “spokes.” No such arrangement would work with India today, for the simple reason that a country so large, especially one that values its strategic autonomy, cannot become another Japan or South Korea to the U.S.</p> |
| <p>Indo-U.S. relations under Biden administration: Close ties to continue <i>By S. D. Pradhan</i> The Times of India January 24, 2021</p> | <p>Bipartisan support in U.S. on several regional and international issues to India is available. Biden and his team have indicated their intention to maintain close ties between the two countries. Even before taking over oath as the President, in a tele-conversation with the Indian Prime Minister both reiterated their commitment to the Indo-U.S. strategic partnership and discussed shared priorities and concerns including the pandemic, climate change, and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.</p> |
| <p>Inauguration of the Biden era <i>By Arvind Kumar and Monish Tourangbam</i> Sunday Guardian January 23, 2021</p> | <p>Besides the bilateral issues in the India-U.S. relationship, how the Biden administration approaches these foreign policy questions will be of consequence to India’s dealings with the United States. India has a complex relationship with China; its role in Afghanistan is crucial, it has deep ties with Iran as well as Russia, has a pivotal role to play in the Indo-Pacific in partnership with the United States and is an inevitable factor in the global drive against climate change. The broader arc of stability in India-U.S. relationship, the election of Kamala Devi Harris as Vice President and the appointment of a number of Indian Americans in the Biden administration have given much optimism and expectations.</p> |
| <p>Democracy and the U.S.-India relationship <i>By Tanvi Madan</i> Brookings January 22, 2021</p> | <p>Democracy, in various ways, has also been a realm of cooperation between the two countries in the past. It could be in the future as well, with the two democracies working together to ensure (1) democratic resilience in the Indo-Pacific region and (2) the resilience of the rules-based international order. To what extent they will be able to do so will depend on whether they can take advantage of certain opportunities and how they deal with certain challenges at home and abroad.</p> |
| <p>President Joe Biden respects successful ties between India and U.S.: White House DNA January 22, 2021</p> | <p>"President Biden, of course, has visited India many times, respects and values the long bipartisan successful relationship between leader in India and the United States. It looks forward to a continuation of that," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters at her daily news conference. She was responding to a question on India-U.S. relationship under the Biden Administration. She also said that the relationship between India and the United States has been further cemented with Kamala Harris becoming the Vice-President of the United States.</p> |

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| <p>Pakistan terror, Chinese aggression key to India-US security ties India Today January 22, 2021</p> | <p>China's aggression, its growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and Pakistan-sponsored terror could be the critical areas that shape the future of India-United States ties and enhanced security cooperation, according to a study by a U.S. think tank. As the new Joe Biden administration begins its journey, the study by the US think tank Brookings Institution looked at the India-US ties in wake of security concerns with both China and Pakistan.</p> |
| <p>Kamala Harris as vice president further cements US-India relationship: White House CNBC TV18 January 22, 2021</p> | <p>The historic inauguration of Kamala Harris as America's vice president has further cemented the importance of the relationship between the United States and India, according to a top White House official. Born to a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, 56-year-old Harris made history on Wednesday, 20th January, when she was sworn in as the first female, first Black and first Asian-American US vice-president.</p> |
| <p>India-U.S. Partnership: Will Biden Admin Bring Better Tidings? <i>By Bidisha Biswas and Anish Goel</i> The Quint January 21, 2021</p> | <p>This is a difficult time for the United States and for India. In the United States, the past four years have compounded and magnified long simmering problems, particularly deep political polarisation and structural inequalities. Moreover, the U.S.'s reputation in the world is at a historic low — and it will take a monumental effort to rebuild its global stature. Meanwhile, India's international image has been battered by internal repression and the erosion of democratic norms, neutralising its efforts to build up its case for being seen as a global leader.</p> |
| <p>India, US must create better climate for FTA negotiations Business Line January 21, 2021</p> | <p>Formal negotiations around an India-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will not be an immediate priority for U.S. President Joe Biden, but both countries need to take measures to create a better climate to start down the path when the time comes, says US- India Business Council President Nisha Biswal. I think the very first focus that both India and the U.S. will have is to overcome the virus and jump start economic growth. I don't know if formal negotiation around an FTA is necessarily going to be top priority for the first 100 days.</p> |
| <p>Biden faces a polarised society, pandemic, economic crisis. Consensus on India-U.S. ties, though, is likely to continue <i>By Arun K. Singh</i> The Indian Express January 20, 2021</p> | <p>Relations with India would remain on track. Biden has consistently been supportive, calling at various times for the removal of sanctions against India, piloting the 2008 Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement in the Senate, and describing the relationship as a defining partnership of the 20th century. Speaking at the Hudson Institute on July 9, 2020, Secretary of State-designate Blinken said that "strengthening and deepening the relationship with India is going to be a very high priority".</p> |
| <p>The Biden presidency will not materially affect U.S.-India ties Livemint January 18, 2021</p> | <p>Former foreign secretary Kanwal Sibal says the Biden presidency will not "materially" affect ties with India. That Biden has said that his administration will go slow on trade deals with countries is seen by him as a positive. Elements of India's Atmanirbhar (self-reliance) policy have been a cause for concern but these doubts could be removed with greater clarity from India.</p> |

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| <p>Continuity in India policy is in U.S. interest <i>By Arvind Kumar</i> Sunday Guardian January 16, 2021</p> | <p>Over the years, a strong foundation has been built in India-U.S. relations with a multifaceted dimension such as political, economic, strategic, nuclear and diplomatic. The India-U.S. strategic engagement has come a long way and is predicated on the changing dynamics of geopolitics, where it seems China's rise features prominently in the current dynamics. The evolving global disorder because of the "Wuhan virus" has provided opportunity to both India and the U.S. for strengthening their relationship. India will emerge on the top of the U.S. radar because of geopolitical compulsions.</p> |
| <p>Emphasising common interests and understanding differences are key to cementing U.S.-India ties <i>By Ajay Chhibber and Frank G Wisner</i> The Economic Times January 15, 2021</p> | <p>An important reason for the growing relationship is the realisation on both sides that it is more than a collection of growing commercial and investment ties, military exercises and equipment acquisitions, intelligence collaborations (Paywall) and political discussions. It rests on two pillars — shared values, and strategic security concerns. That said, to each of these core pillars India and the U.S. bring their own perspectives. Closer cooperation on energy, trade and investment will complement growing geostrategic interests on both sides.</p> |
| <p>India-U.S. Relations: Ties will become stronger under the new U.S. administration, says expert Financial Express January 08, 2021</p> | <p>Dr. Bappaditya Mukherjee, Former Faculty, State University of New York, Geneseo, said that India-U.S. relations are one of the rare policy areas on which there is a bipartisan policy consensus, particularly in the case of defence cooperation. We must remind ourselves that the U.S. took the significant step of designating India as a "major defence partner" way back in December 2016. At that time, Biden was the Vice-President in the Obama administration with considerable sway in foreign policymaking. This designation has allowed India to receive license-free access to dual-use American technologies ever since.</p> |
| <p>Biden Is Expected to Expand U.S.-India Relations While Stressing Human Rights The New York Times December 24, 2020</p> | <p>Most experts agree that China will be the driving force behind how India's relationship with Washington morphs in a Biden administration. "We need India for various reasons," said Ashley J. Tellis, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington. "Most important of which is balancing Chinese power in Asia."</p> |
| <p>India hopeful Biden could restore GSP benefits, but free trade deal to be on backburner The Print December 14, 2020</p> | <p>Biden has made it clear that he will not enter into any free trade agreements with any country but the chances of even a "mini trade deal", also known as a preferential trade agreement (PTA), may not be the focus of the new administration, a source said. The Biden administration could, however, restore the GSP benefits for which India had been pushing the Donald Trump regime as well.</p> |

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2nd edition at: <https://bit.ly/3fVhqD6>