

# Joe Biden–The Right Choice?

Who will occupy the Presidential position in the White House? For several decades, this one question has had a direct impact not only on the shape and future of the global economy but also on the political landscapes of some of the world's leading democracies. A few months ago, this vital question was answered yet again as Joe Biden defeated Donald Trump to become the 46th and current President of the United States of America. Whilst Donald Trump has been amongst the most controversial presidents in the history of the United States, Joe Biden aims to take a passionate and committed stance wherein he looks to defend America's role as a leader on the global stage. However, has America really made the right decision by choosing Joe Biden?

## The Pandemic and Politics

On 20th January 2020, America recorded its first-ever case of the deadly Coronavirus which has negatively impacted the world for over a year now. The American population, along with the Trump administration, did not realize that that one case in Washington would eventually lead to more than 26 million Covid-19 cases. The devastation and downfall of the US economy since then has mainly been due to the political mishandling of the crisis under the leadership of Donald Trump. From imposing incomplete travel restrictions to having a premature easing of rules and regulations to even actively disputing and disregarding science and reason, the Trump administration [failed spectacularly in its efforts to tackle the catastrophic pandemic.](#)



*The US has seen more than 50 million vaccination doses being doled out to its citizens since Joe Biden took office as President. [Image Credits: The Guardian]*

On the other hand, Joe Biden's approach towards the rampant spread of the virus gave hope for a much more organized and well-thought-out process. One of the main objectives mentioned during his campaign was to provide free testing for all citizens and to employ approximately 1,00,000 people who would be part of a national contact-tracing program. Apart from coordinating with federal agencies to deploy resources, Biden also aims to establish about ten testing centres in each state. Overall, Joe Biden aims to tackle the Coronavirus situation with a more sophisticated and organized approach in comparison to the half-baked measures taken by Trump's government.

## **Economic Policies and a Global Outreach**

One of the other extremely vital categories over which both Trump and Biden have contrasting views include economic policies and world relations. With regards to the approach being taken towards immigration, Trump's main focus revolved

around completing the wall along the Mexican border, reducing the number of refugees and asylum seekers, imposing travel bans and modifying the H-1B visa program. On 27th January 2017, former President Donald Trump signed an executive order banning nationals of six Muslim majority countries from travelling to the United States for ninety days. This order was later amended to [indefinitely suspend the intake of refugees from Syria](#). Following this order, only 22,405 refugees were resettled in 2018—the lowest figure ever since the resettlement program was created. During his campaign, Trump guaranteed that Americans will be prioritized for employment. As a result, his immigration policies have benefited Americans as they increased the supply of low-skilled occupations. However, it has been viewed as disadvantageous by many since immigrants add \$1.6 trillion to the economy annually.

	TRUMP APPROACH	BIDEN APPROACH
Taxes	Keep taxes low	Increase capital gains tax from 23% to 43%, which will tax wealth
Health care	Change Affordable Care Act coverage, not clear	Expand Affordable Care Act coverage
COVID-19 Plan	Provide government incentives to pharmaceutical companies for COVID-19 treatment and vaccine	Provide government incentives to pharmaceutical companies for COVID-19 treatment and vaccine
Regulations	Deregulation policy	Tighter environmental regulation
Economic Stimulus	Stimulus next package \$1.2T	Stimulus package \$3.4T if Democrats take both houses of Congress as well; stimulates fast growth

*Studies carried out by various national bodies depict the drastic difference in strategies of Trump and Biden. [Image Credits: Washington University]*

Opposing Trump's views, Joe Biden looks to reverse a majority of Trump's policies in order to protect 'dreamers', re-join the Paris accord, and increase the number of applications for asylums. And, to the genuine surprise of many, both Biden and Trump were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020. Trump's nomination was based on the fact that he, along with the help of his son-in-law Jared Kushner, assisted UAE and Israel in reaching an agreement to normalize relations, in addition to navigating them through the Gulf crisis and helping the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) nations return to normalcy from the blockade. On the contrary, Biden was nominated by a member of the British Parliament merely for not resorting to violent solutions and using positive speech. Although Trump has triumphantly helped solve several inter-country disputes leading to more stable relations, he has also jeopardized the US' relations with NATO and Iran by negatively threatening them. Hence, it is understandable, even justifiable, how Biden's main focus lies on shifting away from Trump's isolationist values to more amiable ones as he looks to repair fractured relationships with US allies and restore America's reputation.

## **Indian-American Ties**

Joe Biden was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and has long been an advocate of deeper ties with India. Not only did he play a vital role in lightening the US sanctions on India in 2001 but also assisted in getting the US-India Nuclear deal through the Senate in 2008. Now, as President, he looks forward to working in partnership with the Indian-American community and celebrate their remarkable contributions to America's success, safety and prosperity. During Trump's presidency, the India-US ties become primarily transactional. Trump quarrelled with India publicly several times on small trade issues that could have been better addressed privately through constructive negotiations. Nevertheless, it is maintained that during former President

Donald Trump's visit to India in 2020, the India-US ties elevated to a '*comprehensive global strategic partnership*'.

An astute planner, former President Donald Trump brought Modi over to the States for the US Elections—a move aimed at generating the support of the Indian-American citizens and raising his voice for stronger Indian-American ties. The *Howdy Modi* event was a grand success and established, at least in the minds of some, the extent of closeness between the Indian Prime Minister and the then US President. Nevertheless, Joe Biden, who is a strong proponent of closer India-US ties, taking over as President is expected to further strengthen these relations over the coming years. Relations with India are expected to get an extra impetus with Kamala Harris, an Indian-American, being installed as the first woman Vice-President of the USA.



*PM Narendra Modi spotted with ex-President Donald Trump at the Howdy Modi event in Houston that attracted a huge crowd of Indian-Americans. [Image Credits: Hindustan Times]*

Hence, it is very much possible that the bilateral relations with India will go back to being institutional-centred and

subject-matter expert-driven under the Biden administration. Despite the domestic political issues raging in India and the pandemic spreading like wildfire throughout the country, both nations have successfully managed to strengthen their relations at an unparalleled pace and scale. They signed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA) which aimed to strengthen economic and military cooperation. According to Taranjit Singh Sandhu, India's ambassador to the US, *"The India-US relationship has been a source of strength in the midst of a global pandemic. From vaccine development to Indo-Pacific security, our countries have worked together to strengthen and deepen our strategic partnership in 2020"*.

## **Joe Biden–The President of the United States**

In their first '100 days' in office, the Biden administration committed to several executive orders that mainly focused on the reversal of certain Trump policies along with making COVID-19 a priority issue. In addition to securing a passage for a \$1.9 trillion COVID relief package, Biden also signed an executive order making masks mandatory while on federal property, including various modes of public transportation. Along with the decision to re-join the World Health Organization, the US will also [surpass Biden's goal of 100 million vaccinations in the first 100 days](#)–the US is currently averaging 1.7 million vaccines a day. Apart from his work done to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, Biden also signed an executive order to re-join the Paris climate agreement signalling that the US is set to return as a climate-change leader and make a difference. Furthermore, he also proposed an immigration bill that allows citizenship opportunities for undocumented immigrants and makes Dreamers eligible for green cards. All of these steps and initiatives that have been taken by the Biden administration show their preparedness to undo the decisions that were perceived to be harmful to the nation.

However, this is just the beginning. Every four years a new

President is welcomed, new promises are made—the older ones are forgotten—and new ambitions are put forward to drive the country and its citizens forward. How many of his promises will Joe Biden keep, and how many will he ‘forget’? Will he succeed in making America great again? The answer to all these questions will trickle out in the following four years as the future of the United States now rests fully in the hands of President Joe Biden.

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