



Modi's State Visit Sets New Paradigm for U.S.-India Strategic Partnership



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Joe Biden at the White House yesterday. (Twitter/@POTUS)

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's sixth visit to the White House – and maiden state visit – outlined an ambitious vision for the future of U.S.-India ties, which he said were entering a period of "unprecedented trust" and were a "force for global good." Echoing a similar message, U.S. President Joe Biden called the U.S. relationship with India the "defining partnership of the 21st century."

During the June 21-23 visit, the two leaders advanced cooperation across a number of critical areas, notably high-technology and defense, and underscored the importance of shared values and people-to-people ties to the broader partnership. Modi's visit was arguably the most significant bilateral engagement since Obama's 2015 visit to India, as reflected in the robust joint **statement**.

Some of the key outcomes included:

- **Doubling Down on Defense:** The visit strengthened defense and security as central pillars of the U.S.-India partnership, with the two leaders expanding cooperation on interoperability, innovation, and defense trade - which will provide numerous commercial opportunities beyond the ones announced during the visit. General Electric concluded a landmark agreement to co-develop 414 jet engines with Indian partners, while the [sale](#) of MQ-9B SeaGuardian unmanned aerial vehicles will provide a major new capability for the Indian services. Maintenance and logistics will become increasingly important elements in the defense relationship, underscored by Boeing's announcement of a C-17 aircraft support facility and parts center. Other notable outcomes included the conclusion of ship repair agreements between the U.S. Navy and Indian shipyards, three new Indian liaison officers at U.S. commands, and the commencement of negotiations on security of supply arrangements.

INDUS X: TAG was proud to be a knowledge partner with the U.S.-India Business Council to launch the U.S.-India Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X), a network of startups, industry, and think tanks geared toward catalyzing defense innovation. The INDUS X factsheet can be found [here](#).

- **Technology and Supply Chains Taking Center Stage:** Calling for a "strategic technology partnership," the United States and India announced a number of initiatives related to artificial intelligence (AI), advanced computing, Open RAN, quantum exchanges, and physics research. In a major boost for India's aspirations to become a node in the global semiconductor ecosystem, Micron, Applied Materials, and Lam Research announced investments in assembly and engineering centers in India, as well as semiconductor workplace skilling. India received a soft endorsement for its "Digital Public Infrastructure" push, with the two sides agreeing on a new Digital Development Partnership. The two sides also announced collaboration on STEM skilling programs, supporting startups under an "Innovation Handshake" initiative, and India's membership in the Minerals Security Partnership - a 12-member, U.S.-led initiative to bolster critical mineral supply chains.
- **Reaching for the Cosmos:** Modi, who chairs the Department of Space, has long been a champion of joint space exploration. India's decision to join the Artemis Accords after two years of negotiations and agreement to send a U.S.-trained Indian astronaut to the International Space Station heralded deeper bilateral space cooperation, with the United States becoming India's premier partner in the space domain. NASA Administrator Bill Nelson plans to visit India this fall to accelerate progress, particularly on private sector opportunities.
- **Significant Commercial Investments:** Both leaders applauded reciprocal investments and local job creation, including more than USD two billion in investments by Indian firms in the United States. As highlighted in the [White House](#)

factsheet, these included a USD 1.5 billion deal for a solar panel facility in Colorado and a USD 120 million investment in a steel plant in Ohio. Of note, Indian manufacturer Epsilon Carbon's announcement of a USD 650 million investment in an electric vehicle battery factory marked the single biggest Indian investment in the U.S. battery sector to date. The two sides also resolved six pending World Trade Organization disputes related to agricultural goods, steel and aluminum, and solar cells. A seventh dispute on poultry is close to resolution. Removing these irritants will hopefully facilitate even more progress at the next bilateral Trade Policy forum meeting in the fall.

- **Developing a Global Partnership:** The two leaders reiterated the centrality of the Quad to a free and open Indo-Pacific and called for greater Indian participation in global and regional multilateral bodies. Particularly significant was Biden's invitation for India to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in San Francisco in November. The leaders also discussed other global hotspots including Ukraine, North Korea, Myanmar, Pakistan, and the South China Sea. Though the statement avoided any mention of the Taiwan Strait due to Indian sensitivities, the two leaders discussed China in private engagements.
- **Windfall for People-to-People and Education Ties:** In a significant move, Washington announced plans to open two new consulates in India - in Ahmedabad and Bangalore - and pilot a new program to adjudicate domestic U.S. renewals of certain work visas, such as H1-Bs. While the consulate openings are years away, both measures will help address the sizable visa processing backlog for Indian nationals. The two sides also launched a new U.S.-India Cancer Dialogue to catalyze exchanges between medical professionals and researchers.
- **Messaging on Democratic Values a Key Theme:** Amid questions about democracy and religious freedom in India by some U.S. commentators and members of Congress, Modi publicly emphasized on multiple occasions the importance of shared democratic values and plurality. During their joint press conference, Modi stated democracy was in the "DNA" of both countries, and Biden stated the two had discussed the issue in their private meeting. Modi also mentioned "democracy" more than a dozen times in his joint address before Congress - an attempt to address some U.S. concerns.

Modi's visit injected a new level of ambition in U.S.-India ties, and both countries will seek to maintain the momentum and solidify the partnership through several upcoming engagements, including Biden's visit to India in September for the G20 Summit, the APEC Summit in San Francisco in November, the 2+2 Dialogue in New Delhi, and the next Quad leaders' summit in New Delhi in 2024.



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