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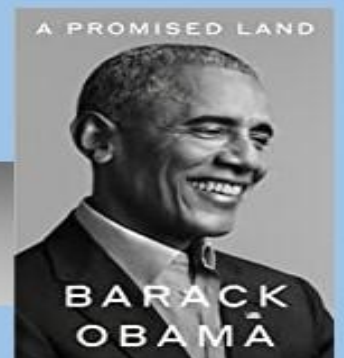
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## The U.S. under Joe Biden

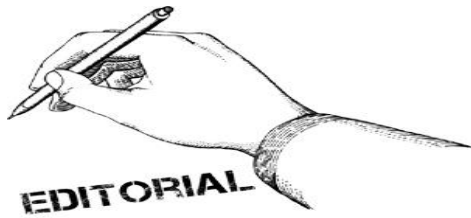
Accent and the Man

Book Review: A Promised Land  
by Barack Obama



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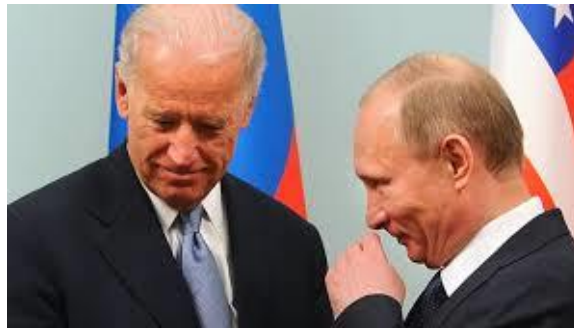




# The USA under Joe Biden, Most Probably

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. (Joe Biden) will be sworn in as the forty-sixth president of the United States of America on January 20, 2021. He'll be the second Roman Catholic ever elected to the highest office. John F Kennedy was the first.



Joe Biden became a junior Senator from Delaware in 1972 at the age of 30. Soon after winning the Senate seat, his first wife and one-year old daughter were killed in an automobile accident. Biden held his Senate seat for 36 years and commuted every day by train to Washington DC from his home in Delaware. He married Dr. Jill Biden, an educator in 1977. Joe Biden's first son, Beau Biden died of brain cancer in 2015. He has two living children, Ashley Blazer and Hunter Biden.

Biden went through a brain surgery in 1988 due to aneurysm. Soon after that he suffered from a pulmonary embolism but still functioned as a Senator and Vice President under Barack Obama. He served on the Senate Judiciary Committee (1987 to 1995) and Senate Foreign Relations Committee (2001 to 2003 and 2007 to 2009).

Biden sought the office of President of the United States three times. He was unsuccessful

in winning the primaries in 1988 and 2008. He tried again in 2020 and won the election. Once sworn in, he will be the oldest person to assume office as president at the age of 78. President Trump is the oldest person to hold the office,

so far. Although he (Biden) proved to be vigorous enough to run a tough campaign against Trump, the prognosis of his health is uncertain considering his medical history and occasional forgetfulness.

So, what kind of president will Joe Biden be? Let's count the positive first. In my view, we need a president who is experienced in both domestic and foreign policies. As the leader of the free world, one cannot afford someone to learn on-the-job. Take the case of our rivals. The President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping has been active in politics since an early age. While a teenager, he followed his father in exile where they lived in a cave. He joined the Chinese Communist Party (CPP) and became its secretary soon after graduating as a chemical engineer. Xi rose through the ranks and became the governor of the Fujian province in 1999. He developed the skill to consolidate power and became head of CPP in 2012. I am not aware of any US president since George

Herbert Walker Bush (the 41st) who could boast to possess enough political experience to match the backgrounds of the leaders of China, Britain and Japan. Joe Biden has 47 years of political experience. That should be a plus in his favor.

In addition to the above, he is a fine gentleman. Recently he postponed negative campaigning against Mr. Trump while the latter suffered from Covid-19. After his son Beau died, then vice president reluctantly decided not to challenge Hillary Clinton for the Democratic nomination in 2015. He confronted Putin once and said to him, "I'm looking into your eyes. I don't think you have a soul." I am pretty sure that he will bring civility back to the highest office in the land.

I expect Biden to maintain status quo with the pacific rim countries. As for India is concerned, his policy will be ambiguous as he will try to appease the Muslim countries aided by his pro-Pakistani VP, Kamala Harris.

At the end of the day, there are harsh realities that matter more than personal traits alone. I can foresee some caveats on the horizon that may malign his presidency. The first being Biden may have to live under Obama's shadow. The Obamas are still very popular among the Democrats. Biden is no match to them in that respect. Mr. Obama is bitter about Trump interrupting his legacy and he may subsequently act like a pedant to Biden who may succumb to him as a sycophant. Mr. Obama has already asked him to give a cabinet position to his UN Ambassador and Security Advisor, Susan Rice who is infamous for handling 2012 Benghazi tragedy.

Unlike Trump, Biden believes more in symbolism than pragmatism. He has already indicated that he'd open the southern floodgate to illegal immigrants and remove the travel ban on thirteen African nations that was imposed by Trump administration for the sake of national

security. No wonder, the terror attacks on the US soil from outside the U.S. were almost non-existent during the present administration.

Biden is likely to return international leadership to Europe. The liberals have always been obsequious to the Europeans fascinated by latter's illusory vision of the world and socialism. Biden will return to Paris Climate Agreement which is more political than practical. With no enforcement mechanisms in place and no repercussions for failing to meet emissions reduction targets, countries are essentially free to do whatever they want, meaning they will continue on their business-as-usual without making much progress. "The initial commitments made by 184 countries that agreed to the Paris climate accord in 2015, it's found that only 36 countries have made pledges that could conceivably reach the 2030 goal." (Source: Universal Ecological Fund).

"Meanwhile, contrary to popular belief, the U.S. is making progress on climate change. Overall, the country's carbon emissions fell 1.7 percent last year. Looking at energy-related carbon emissions in the last five years, the U.S. has experienced a roughly 6 percent drop" (Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration). We need to know the facts instead of just being overwhelmed by emotion and media spin. Biden will also join Iran Nuclear Agreement. As a result, of all the above, the Europeans will award him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2021.

The economy will keep prospering under Biden as the economic machinery will revert to its full steam due to the availability of Corona vaccine. That may make it difficult for Mr. Trump to come back in 2024, but no one knows the future which is always unpredictable. Who knew about Corona Virus that became the reason for Trump's defeat anyway?

# Commentary

## Let Us Learn from 2020 by Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

"Let's Learn from 2020 and End the Agony for Ever" by Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

American presidential election is a mess and it must be simplified. The biggest problem with the presidential election process is an absence of a uniform directive to govern the election across all states. Every state in the Union has its own convention

regarding this matter. This provides room for the Secretary of State of each state to manipulate the process to his/her own party's advantage. For example, Democratic-run Nevada decided to extend the deadline for receiving the ballots to November 10 - a week past the election day. Pennsylvania ruled to accept mail-in ballots up to three days after the election day. At least seven states explicitly allow voters to change their ballot if they have voted before election day. Wisconsin even allows voters to change their minds up to three times before the vote becomes official. Although there is no evidence of ever applying this law, Kentucky's constitution prohibits idiots from casting a ballot, however, a person must be ruled an idiot by a judge.

In Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan absentee ballots can't be counted until 7 a.m. on Election Day by state law. Thus, ballots take far longer to process than many other states. Many states have different rules about allowing observers to monitor vote counting. In some Democratic-run cities such as Detroit and

Philadelphia, the ballot-counters were alleged to hide the counting from the Republican



observers. Some ballot bags in Philadelphia, surprisingly, contained ballots for Mr. Biden only. I have no evidence to support those allegations. The United States is the most advanced country in the world in many respects, but when it comes to voting they

need to learn from India, the largest democracy in the world. "Many of the Indian politicians may be corrupt and criminals but when it comes to voting and tallying the votes, they run a squeaky-clean machine. Voting in India is conducted by electronic voting machines (EVM). More than 2.3 million EVMs were used in 2019 general elections all across India. GPS devices were fitted in the EVMs to monitor their movement. The EVMs allowed vote counting to be completed in up to three hours compared with manual counting, which could take 30 to 40 hours. The electoral body also used digital cameras, videotaping of speeches and the use of wireless networks during the election process to avoid any foul play. One more thing, Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines were used along with EVMs at all polling stations to allow voters to cross-check the votes." (Source al-Jazeera)

In India all the voters are allowed to vote on a given date by region and all the results are announced on a pre-determined date. In 2019 General Election, 553 million eligible voters turned out to vote. They all voted and the

results were counted on time to give Mr. Modi's party an undisputed majority. Keep in mind that unlike the USA where we have a two-party system, India fielded 8,251 candidates representing 464 different parties in 2019. The sole inhabitant of the remote Gir National Forest in Gujarat, home to Asiatic lions, had his own polling station complete with his own electronic voting machine.

Thanks to the complications, president Trump has refused to accept Mr. Biden as a genuine winner due to the alleged irregularities in voting and vote counting process. He is suing a number of states demanding either a recount or nullify the ballots received long after the election day. The winner, eventually, may be decided either by the U.S. Congress or the Supreme Court.

To add to the confusion, the next president will not be officially elected until December 14, when electoral college votes will be cast and collected. The United States Constitution doesn't require that the members of the

electoral college vote for the winner. They can vote for any candidate they choose to. Over the years, 165 electors have not cast their votes for candidates who had won in their states.

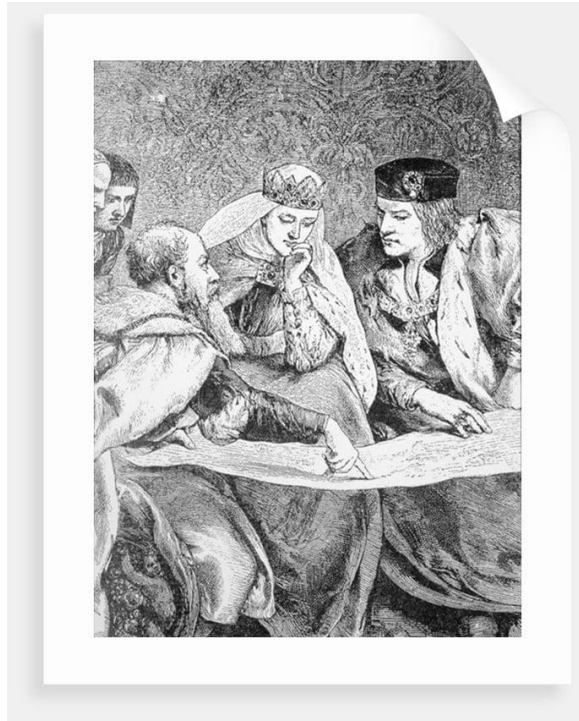
It doesn't end there. The electoral votes must be certified by both the Senate and the House on the sixth day of January.

"Congress shall be in session on the sixth day of January succeeding every meeting of the electors. The Senate and House of Representatives shall meet in the Hall of the House of Representatives at the hour of 1 o'clock in the afternoon on that day, and the President of the Senate (the current vice president) shall be their presiding officer." (U.S. Code 15).

Let's hope that the present nightmare ends soon and a uniform election law in all the states of the United States of America is implemented before 2024.

## We Remembered Columbus

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'



Christopher Columbus discovered America on October 12, 1492 just like I discovered the United States of America on March 17, 1974. How can anyone discover a place that already exists? Anyway, yesterday was a holiday in honor of Columbus discovering America. For the record, Columbus never actually walked on North American soil; he only went to the Caribbean and Central America.

Regardless, our family and I remembered and honored the memories of Christopher Columbus by lighting Indian Diyas (cotton wicks laced in butter) below his picture and singing devotional songs in his praise. We invited our family priest to sprinkle holy water and rice on Columbus' picture and asked him to narrate to us the story of Christopher Columbus. This is an

Indian tradition. This is how we honor great men and women in our culture.

"We must honor and respect Christopher Columbus. He is the reason we exist on this land today. Had he not discovered this land, we couldn't have been born or immigrated here," our priest continued, "Columbus was a great man although he did everything wrong in his life. He was even born in a wrong country. He should have been born in Spain instead of Italy. He later realized the mistake and corrected the course by first marrying a Portuguese woman and then deciding to move to Spain where he lived with his newly found mistress."

Columbus wanted to be a spice merchant, but he ended up becoming a slave merchant instead. India was rich in spices, so he set out to go to India after procuring grants from Queen Isabella I of Spain. As a part of his habit, Columbus took a wrong turn and ended up on a wrong continent called the Americas. He was so befuddled that he called the native people Indians.

The New World that Columbus encountered was a wasteland devoid of any spice. Poor Columbus kept on looking for ginger, turmeric and cinnamon. He needed something, at least enough, to fill the kitchen rack of Queen Isabella I back home. Columbus returned home with three boats full of indigenous slaves as he had nothing else to show to the queen.

The queen was preparing a special meal to honor Columbus and needed the spice. Columbus kept on insisting that he had actually

found spices, but left the sacks back in India by mistake. So, he was granted another voyage to go back to India and bring the lost sacks of spices. This time Columbus brought a tree bark from Trinidad that looked like cinnamon. He leaked the bark in front of the queen and kept on uttering “yum, yum, yum.” The queen was convinced and sent Columbus on his third voyage.

This time Columbus exterminated the entire population of Hispaniola’s indigenous people by mistreating them and bringing them as slaves to Spain. Those who were left died of European diseases brought about by Columbus and his crew.” The priest, thus, ended his sermon.

In retrospect, Columbus was lucky not to go to India. Sikandar Lodi, then the Sultan of Delhi was moving his capital from Delhi to Agra. He

was looking for a few healthy men as movers. I am pretty sure that Columbus and his crew would have ended up working for the Sultan and would have ended up in the famous mental asylum there.

In the end, all of sang the Oscar winning song “Jai Ho” and feasted on Tacos from Taco Bell, Columbus’ favorite food in the New World. Oh well, It was a nice day. How was your Columbus Day celebration?

### **SOME GOLDEN THOUGHTS OF THIRUKKURAL**

**Contributed by Srinivasa Bhat**

Tirukkural was written by Tiruvalluvar (a Tamil poet/writer) more than 5,000 yrs ago. It’s one of the ancient sciences on Human Behaviour, which has not changed in spite of modern education & technology!

SOME GOLDEN THOUGHTS OF THIRUKKURAL:\*

1. If your children lie to you often, it is because you over-react too harshly to their inappropriate behaviour.
2. If your children are not taught to confide in you about their mistakes, you’ve lost them.
3. If your children had poor self-esteem, it is because you advice them more than you encourage them.
4. If your children do not stand up for themselves, it is because from a young age you have disciplined them regularly in public.
5. If your children take things that do not belong to them, it is because when you buy them things, you don’t let them chose what they want.
6. If your children are cowardly, it is because you help them too quickly.
7. If your children do not respect other people’s feelings, it is because instead of speaking, you order & command them.
8. If your children are too quick to anger, it is because you give too much attention to misbehaviour & you give little attention to good behaviour.
9. If your children are excessively jealous, it is because you congratulate them only when they successfully complete something & not when they improve at something even if they don’t successfully complete it
10. If your children intentionally disturb you, it is because you are not physically affectionate enough.
11. If your children are openly defiant, it is because you openly threaten to do something but don’t follow through.
12. If your child is secretive, it is because they are sure that you would blow things out of proportion.
13. If your children back-answer to you, it is because they watch you do it to others & think its normal behaviour.
14. If your children don’t listen to you but listen to others, it is because you are too quick to jump to conclusions
15. If your children rebel it is because they know you care more about what others think than what is right

## Youth Is Such A Wonderful Thing

by Anil Shrivastava “Musafir”



The passing of Sean Connery, the original James Bond 007 today (October 31, 2020) took me back to the decade of sixties. I entered my teenage years as the decade of the sixties began and reached the prime of my youth as it ended. I

was just getting aware of the intriguing world of national and international affairs. That was a decade of anticipation - anticipation of completing school, entering a career, romance and marriage and a call to start believing, dreaming and start creating. There was a Peter Pan inside me reminding me that I had the ability to fly and rise up to my truest potential.

I didn't know that I'd be a part of a generation called the baby-boomers. I don't particularly like that term, but that's a label that is stuck with me. I loved the hippies and flower children coming to India from Europe and the USA in search of peace, love and drugs. I met many of them during my visits to Kolkata and Delhi. I grew long hair, extended side-burns and donned bell-bottom pants to conform to the trend.

Sean Connery was an enigma. He was not like today's movie stars who are in your face all the time. He was so beloved that he was shared like folklore. Who can forget his grand entrances as Agent 007 in James Bond movies? Talking of grand entrances, Ursula Andress, the first Bond girl's ingress on the beach in Dr. No was the most mesmerizing of all.

In that period, I also gained awareness about the United States of America. I remember

following the Kennedy-Nixon election, reading about Cassius Clay defeating Sony Liston and the US falling behind then Soviet Union in space race. I also remember the thrill of America ultimately winning the space race on July 20, 1969 by landing two men on the moon – “That's one small step for (a) man. One giant leap for mankind.”

Assassinations of John F Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy left a deep scar in my heart. I didn't like Americans being that violent. Vietnam war was at its peak. There were lives lost including the My Lai massacre where 500 innocent Vietnamese were killed. There were widespread protests in the US against the war which grew into a broad social movement over the ensuing several years in parallel with the Civil Rights Movement. I was being exposed to the slogans like “Black Is Beautiful” and “Black Power” for the first time.

I saw and watched television (black and white) for the first time and was amazed at the advancement in technology. The decade ended with Richard Nixon in the White House, Indira Gandhi at the helm in India and I being introduced to the daily grind of a working life.

Those memories are still deep down somewhere within my psyche. With the end of the sixties, my bout of fantasy with the world had ended. I was astonished to feel the complexities of the real world. That was quite a rude awakening for me. My innocence was stolen by a thief called age. When I expressed my frustration to a wise man I met on a bus during one of my desultory trips to Shimla (a hill station in India), he said to me, “Youth has no age. There are no limits and anything is possible.” I remember his words and live on with that kick.

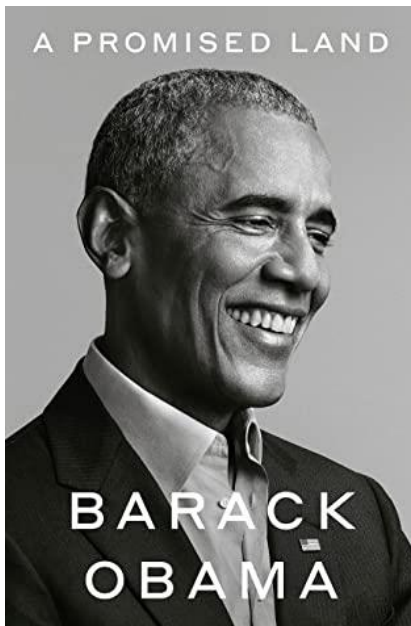




## A Promised Land

Author: Barack Obama

Kindle Edition (752 pages, Published in 2020)



*A Promised Land* is a chronicle of the events in Barack Obama's life's journey, so far, in a historic perspective. I must admit that after reading through half of the 752 pages, I had to leaf through the rest to ready this review for an on-time publication.

*Obama's odyssey* from his childhood to becoming the forty-fourth president of the United States of America is full of miracles and promises. It was all accomplished through his perseverance, organizational skills and grassroots activism.

Obama takes the readers along with him everywhere he goes including the far corners of the world, his own home where he interacts with his wife, Michelle Obama and two children, to the White House, to his cabinet meetings and beyond.

In *A Promised Land*, Obama talks candidly about his relationship with Jeremiah Wright, a controversial African-American religious leader and how the media misrepresented their relationship. He also talks at length

about Joe Biden and Hillary Clinton. He talks about the frustration that Hillary Clinton experienced losing to Obama, a junior senator from Illinois. At the same time, he also realizes that Hillary is a smart and ambitious woman "who had chafed under the constraints of their times."

Surprisingly, he doesn't talk about Trump until towards the end of the book where he writes, "For most of my first two years in office, Trump was apparently complimentary of my presidency, telling Bloomberg that 'overall I believe he's done a very good job'; but maybe because I didn't watch much television, I found it hard to take him too seriously."

Obama also mentions his perception of Indian politics and its leaders. He mentions this about Rahul Gandhi, a scion of Nehru-Gandhi family and the leader of the opposition party in India, "Rahul Gandhi has a nervous, unformed quality about him, as if he were a student who'd done the coursework and was eager to impress the teacher but deep down lacked either the aptitude or the passion to master the subject."

Obama honestly reflects his frustration with partisan politics and how that greatly impeded passage of the Affordable Care Act also known as Obama Care. Other topics dealt in detail are his handling of the global financial crisis, and Osama bin Laden's killing.

All in all, *A Promised Land* is a good read about our contemporary history and lessons learned from there.

**-Reviewed by Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'**

# REFLECTION

## *Growing up Indian-American* by Seema Bhat

It's Sunday evening and my parents are coming to visit me. I sit in a brown armchair in my living room and stare in the south direction out my apartment window. I span left and right and around the street corner to see if I can spot their car. It's already 6:30...where are they?

They're already a half-an-hour late. This shouldn't surprise me; after all, even my sister and I have learned to follow IST.

IST is otherwise known as Indian Standard Time. As a child, I was always dragged to those parties where all of the adults pinched my cheeks and I smiled and nodded, acting as if I enjoyed it. Instead, I wanted to escape to the basement to play with the rest of the kids.

As my mom dressed me up in a lahanga or an "Indian" dress, I asked her, "Why do we always show up so late to these parties?"

"Well, we don't want to be the first ones to show up."

"But why doesn't everyone just show up when they're told to instead of being late?"

"If we're invited to come at 6:30pm, then we arrive at 7:30pm because it's closer to when dinner will be served."

"But why don't they serve food at normal hours like 8:00pm instead of 10:00pm?"

"Not everyone arrives by 8:00pm though. Then the food would get cold."

Such debates became tiresome, and so instead of trying to understand this phenomenon of Indian culture, I just learned to accept it. Eventually, I began to do the same, even showing up

to my friends' parties late. 📸

As I look to the left again, I see a forest green Suburban round the southwest corner of the intersection and park directly in front of my house. My mom and dad march up the



steps with three grocery bags each in their arms and open the door. "Hello!" my dad says to me in a singsong voice. My mom is behind him, smiling at me as she leans back to keep the door open. I still try to be the rebel, acting as if their visit is just so that they can bring me food, cash, and take me out for dinner. But I can't contain my excitement to see them again, so I

get up to hold the door open while smiling back at them.

“Hi! Where have you been?” I ask them. I felt like a mother at that moment.”

“Nanu nimagay...Didn’t I tell you? We might come around 6:15 or 6:30?” 📺

Because my parents find that it is extremely important to follow the news, they watch the local, national, and investigative news shows, including Dateline and 20/20. My mom also loves to watch the cop shows filled with car chases and dysfunctional people. After watching these programs over and over again, my parents, especially my mother, began to think that these crimes occur all the time and only when they are not present. They rarely let me drive alone because “you never know. What if something happens to you?”

“ Even if you were with me and a guy with a gun came up to us, you couldn’t do anything!” I argued.

“Yes we could.”

“What?” I was just anticipating the completely illogical answer they would give.

“ We would do something ! It’s too dangerous. Tell your friends to come pick you up.”

I continue to tell them that I take safety precautions and that they are just over exaggerating over the amount of violence in this world. In response, I receive numerous urban legend e-mails from them everyday followed with phone calls of, “This wouldn’t happen in India!”

“ This is the year 2001, not 1977. Things have changed in India. They are just as bad there as they are here. You just don’t know about it.”

With that, I am told to make sure the door is locked and call again tomorrow. 📺

I walk across the lawn with my mom and we climb into the car. My dad puts in one of my favorite Hindi CD’s, 1942 A Love Story. I try to sing along, yet I don’t know Hindi so it’s just a

bunch of sounds being thrown together. We arrive at Pizza Hut, a family favorite. We are seated right away and have been given menus but there is no need to look at them; we already know that we’ll be having pizza with jalapenos.

I seriously believe that over the years the spices that I have consumed have numbed my tongue. Everything needs to be covered in spice. Even the basic macaroni and cheese tastes better with some masala thrown in. My mom sometimes makes “foreign” foods like manicotti or spaghetti, but she always includes the spice, which makes it even better than the kind served in Italian restaurants. We even bring a bottle of crushed red pepper with us in fear that the restaurant we attend cannot provide us with any.

Our waitress takes our order, gathers our menus, and leaves. My parents ask me how my classes are going and when my MCAT classes will begin. The recent news has improved their, and supposedly my, reputations among the Indian community.

I recently told my parents that I wanted them to begin to speak Kannada with me more often. As a kid, I just wanted to be like everyone else in school, so I never really cared to learn to read, write, or speak Kannada. My friends would ask me if I knew how to speak “Indian”, and I would tell them that I could say a few things. When they asked me to say some phrase, I sometimes wouldn’t know how to say it. I’d kind of fudge it—they wouldn’t know whether I was right or wrong anyways.

This was good enough for me at the time. Over the years though, I began to realize that I’ve been losing a lot of my Indian roots. Sure, I watched the Indian films, ate the food, took the dance lessons, even been to the country, but I didn’t feel that I had enough of the cultural knowledge, something as simple as religion or language, that I could pass it on to my kids. I want the chance to learn before my parents are gone.

*(Dr. Seema Bhat Patel writes from Texas)*

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## Justin Trudeau's Folly by Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'



The Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau made an international buffoon of himself last week by stating that he was concerned about the farmers, most of them from the Sikh-dominated Indian state of Punjab, camped out on the outskirts of Delhi in a protest against farm reforms.

Trudeau made that statement to appease the Sikh MPs in the House of Commons (Lower House of the Canadian Parliament) whose support is crucial for the survival of his coalition government. As a matter of fact, Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh, was instrumental in giving a second term to Trudeau after Trudeau's Liberal Party failed to secure a majority in the election in 2015.

Although the Sikhs make up only 1.3% of the Canadian population (500,000 Sikhs out of 37.6 million Canadians), they have established enclaves where they are in majority. For example, in Woodstock (near Toronto, Ontario) 80% of the inhabitants are Sikhs. Imagine this,

there are 18 Sikh MPs in the Lower House of Canada compared to only 13 Sikh MPs in the Indian Lok Sabha (India's Lower House). Punjabi is the third most spoken language in Canada after English and French.

Unfortunately, unlike the majority of Indian Sikhs, the Canadian Sikhs support Khalistan, a separatist movement that promotes cessation of the Punjab state from India. According to a 2018 Canadian intelligence report Khalistanis were listed as one of the top five terrorist groups in Canada. The same group downed an Air-India plane on June 23, 1985, that claimed the lives of all 329 innocent passengers on board. There were five families from Michigan who were my friends and acquaintances. One little boy played baseball in my son's team. Trudeau's government subsequently watered down the claims regarding Khalistani terrorism after assuming his second term as the PM of Canada. That makes him an international

criminal not worthy of holding any office of consequence.

The Indian parliament passed Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce Act, 2020 on September 27, 2020 with all good intentions. The aforesaid act would allow the Indian farmers to trade their agricultural produce to outside agencies bypassing the state laws. This would be financially beneficial to the farmers since they would be able to grow certain cash crops in partnership with big businesses and agricultural trading firms bypassing many local and state fees.

There is a big resistance to this act from some groups. Some are real and some political. Many farmer organizations oppose this, saying it will leave small growers with little bargaining power. Many farmer organizations oppose this, saying it will totally destroy small growers because nearly 85% of India's poor farmers own less than 5 acres of land and they will find it difficult to directly negotiate with large buyers

of farm goods. Without offering an alternative arrangement to small growers, such as private markets or direct-purchase, the new rule does not make much sense to them.

Politically, it is true that the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce Act, 2020 was rushed by the ruling Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) on a voice vote without allowing much discussion on this topic. However, the opposition parties and especially the ruling Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) and the Congress Parties in the state of Punjab are pandering to the farmers' fears. The Canadian Khalistanis (militant Sikhs) are taking this opportunity to reignite the separatist movement by the Punjabi Sikhs in India.

Good or bad, this is absolutely an internal matter of India. Mr. Modi's government is negotiating with the farmers' organizations to come to an amicable solution. Justin Trudeau has no business in poking his nose in this matter.



## Organ Donation - A gift for life

by Rajendra Srivastava

Donating organs saves and enhances the quality of life of people needing them. Millions of people lose vital organs due to accidents or they may be born with congenital abnormalities to begin with. Organ donation is more important than monetary or other asset donations in my opinion. Organ donation involves complex procedures due to legal, medical and surgical requirements associated with it. That impedes the process and, many a time, discourages a willing donor from offering the gift of life.

Notwithstanding, there is an acute dearth of human organs' availability around the globe for people needing an organ transplant. Other factors holding back potential donors from donating organs are a lack of awareness about the criticality of organ donation and inhibitions about donating organs even to their loved ones needing an organ transplant to survive another day.

An organ can be donated by a living person himself and also by a person who is dead (through his next of kin). There is no age limit for donating an organ by a living person. Recently in March 2020 in USA, a very old person aged 92 years was a donor. However, it is essential that a donor does not suffer from cancer, or hepatitis or contagious diseases. The surgical team that removes the organ should be satisfied that the removal of the

organ will not affect adversely the physical, emotional and psychological health of the donor. The team also ensures that the organ being removed is fit for storage and transplant.

In the Indian context, it's important to know that the Hindu religion (80% of the Indians are Hindus) does not object to organ donation. In ancient times, sage Dadhichi donated his bones to Devas to create 'Vajra' Astra (a potent weapon) to defeat the Asuras.

In Mahabharata (a Hindu epic) Karna, the noble antagonist donated his three body parts including his gold tooth to Lord Indra to the benefit of his own enemies. According to the Hindu religion, the real self is soul that doesn't die whereas the body is mortal and disposable. Therefore, one should not grieve for the body. This ideology clearly paves the way for organ donation residing in one's physical body.

It's time to spread the awareness about the need of organ donation. The governments need to ease the legal and medical formalities and procedure related to organ donations. We need to motivate more people to donate organs and thereby improve the quality of life of the persons needing vital gifts of life.

Please see some important information related to organ donations mentioned below. You may also visit [www.OrganDonor.gov](http://www.OrganDonor.gov) or [www.notto.gov.in](http://www.notto.gov.in) for more information.



What Can Be Donated?	Deceased Organ Donation	Tissues Donation
One kidney	Both kidneys	Epithelial tissues
A portion of Liver/pancreas/intestines	Both lungs	Connective tissues
Platelets	Both livers	Muscle Tissues
	Corneas	Nervous tissues
	Heart	
	Pancreas	
	Intestines	
	Face	
	Both hands	

*Mr. Rajendra Srivastava writes from Lucknow, India.*

## Covid-19- What Have We Learnt So Far?

By Niru Prasad, MD

As we all know there has been a pandemic episode of COVID-19 -19 virus since late dec 2019. This deadly virus has originally originated in Wuhan, a city within the Hubel province of china. The Chinese authority reported to the world health organization identifying the new virus as corona virus belonging to the same group as the Sars epidemic of SARS and middle East respiratory syndrome. My previous article with a detailed write up about this deadly virus pathology along with involvement of lungs leading to mortality has been mentioned on 4th March as a tv interview at Bloomfield twp. tv now on YouTube and vimeo .com.

There has been disaster throughout the world at present due to mortality and morbidity and since this virus spreads by close contacts through our respiratory tract strict precautions have been advised regarding our own protection. The graphs and total number of people dying from this is changing very fast daily and the best way to keep informed is through!cnn.com daily briefing, the CDC, WHO, the Academy of Pediatrics. Internal medicine and more.

### What are the facts and Myths?

1 the disintegration time of a virus depends upon temperature, humidity and surface contact. The virus is a thin strand of RNA surrounded by fat soluble lipid, hence a good thorough hand wash with soap, for 20 seconds is advised.

2 Further alcohol, bleach. Play important role in killing the germ

3 This virus molecule remains stable outside in winter months in a humid environment and

during summer the heat can destroy the virus particles.

4 It does not penetrate through healthy skin.

5 people to person contact is through the respiratory tract, nasal mucosa contact leads to sneezing, cold running nose, spread through lower respiratory tract leads to symptoms of bronchitis pneumonia and serious breathing problems necessitating the use of respirators.

6 the gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, loss of taste in mouth are due to swallowing productive sputum. Sputum.

7 Persistent high fever in symptomatic patients along with muscle aches. Myalgia is crucial towards the diagnosis.

8 As of now there is no vaccines available however all around the world Several Labs are in stage of preparing vaccines

9 diagnosis is usually made through nasal swabs culture

10 gargles with warm water and salt, lemon honey, will soothe the throat and reduce the growth of swallowed bacteria.

11 All viruses can change /mutate over time. An outbreak result when infected animals carrying the virus comes in contact with human beings by consumption of meat or handling them.

12 The virus can survive on fabrics for 6 to 8 hours, on counter surfaces for 4 to 6 hours and metallic surfaces for a little longer duration.

13 The new guidelines and recommendation from CDC advises all individuals while they go outside to public areas should wear universal



masks and health care professionals should wear tight fit N 95 s masks.

Pediatric safety and managing stress and anxiety during COVID-19 -19 pandemics Here are few guidelines as recommended by the American academy of pediatrics Kids usually suffer from colds nasal congestions symptoms suggestive of flu however once there is an exposure to corona patients and fever plus chills They should be isolated and tested. Those with chronic lungs diseases these symptoms are more suggestive of complicated respiratory distress syndrome and closed observation is needed.

Furthermore, Emphasize on personal protective measure. Maintaining a distance of 6 feet and frequent washing your hands for 10 seconds. Eat healthy diet and keep in touch with your school assignments. American academy of Pediatrics preventative measures is the following diagram but here are other preventative measures:

1. Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
2. Avoid close contact with others
3. Stay home if sick
4. Cover cough and sneeze
5. Wear face mask

Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

## **Maradona**

**By AshokKumar Lal**



He possessed such a mastery,  
To charm us with his artistry.  
He also had his inadequacy,  
That drew down decency.

He went over limits both  
In his game and ecstasy,  
He played like none did,  
Nor will someone I foresee.

No one can ever forget  
His goal of the century,  
The curving of the ball,  
That brought him victory.

Alas! He was too young  
To realize what he had done.  
Maradona was the chosen one  
He failed cuz he too was human.



1. What does the "G" mean in "G-Man"?
2. The word "news" originates from the first letters of the 4 main directions on a compass (North, East, West, South).
3. What is the name given to Indian food cooked over charcoal in a clay oven?
4. The average woman is 5 inches / 13 centimeters shorter than the average man.
5. Albert Einstein had trouble with mathematics when he was in school.
6. When did the website "Facebook" launch?
7. The scientific name for the Southern Lights is Aurora Australis?
8. What is the currency of Poland?
9. Which carbonated drink was introduced first?
10. What is the full title of the Prime Minister of the UK?

Answers: 1. Government 2. False 3. Tandoori 4. True 5. False 6. 2004 7. True 8. Zloty 9. Dr Pepper 10. First Lord of the Treasury

## Who Wants to be VP?

By Anil Shrivastava

As we are on the cusp between electing a new president and keeping the present one, partisan voices are relentlessly attacking us from all directions. Those unwanted demagogues are violating our privacy through social media, robocalls, television ads, talk shows, door-to-door campaigning, and unsolicited leaflets. The fact remains that regardless of who we elect will be as flawed as we are. After all, he will represent us and our conscience. The good news is that the next president will have the freedom to do the right things without worrying about pleasing his base. Neither Mr. Trump nor Mr. Biden will seek the office again, one limited by the term-limit another because of the age constraint.

Although I wish every candidate a long life, it is important to ponder about the possibility of the elected president dying in office, thus giving way to his VP to the highest office in the land. This is important considering the age factor of the two presidential candidates.

After all, nine vice presidents in the U.S. became president after the death of their predecessors. John Tyler was the first VP to assume presidency when William Harrison (the 9th president) died of pneumonia 31 days after taking the oath of office. Four VPs assumed the highest office due to the assassination of the president. Andrew Johnson, the first president

to later become a US Congressman replaced Abraham Lincoln after his assassination in 1865. Chester Arthur became president after James Garfield died in office in 1881, six and a half months after being shot by an assassin. Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt became the youngest president to assume office after William McKinley was assassinated in 1901. He was, probably, the most famous VP to become the president of the United States. He assumed office when he was 42 years and 322 days old. The next president to be assassinated was John F Kennedy who was the youngest president ever elected to the office of the president. He was 43 years and 236 days old on the day of assuming the office of the president. Kennedy's VP, Lyndon Johnson got the dubious honor of taking the oath of office in mid-air aboard Air

Force One while returning from Dallas after Kennedy's assassination. This was resented by Mrs. Kennedy and many of Kennedy's faithful. Other VPs who became president due to the death of their predecessor were Millard Fillmore, Calvin Coolidge, and



Harry Truman. Of all the VPs who later became president, Gerald Ford's case was unique. He was an accidental president. Spiro Agnew was Richard Nixon's VP who pleaded no contest to the charges of bribery and money laundering brought against him and later resigned in disgrace. Ford, who never ran for VP's office

was chosen to become VP to succeed Mr. Agnew. He later became an accidental president after Richard Nixon resigned in disgrace on August 9, 1974.

Only John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Martin van Buren (the first president to be born in the U.S.), Richard Nixon and George Herbert Walker Bush were elected president as direct successors to the president they served under. The two vice presidential candidates in 2020 are the current VP Mike Pence (Republican) and Senator Kamala Harris (Democrat). Let's look at their records to help us decide who will be more suitable to succeed their bosses, if elected.

"In 2003, Kamala Harris became the District Attorney of the City and County of San Francisco. Among her achievements as District Attorney, Harris started a program that gives first-time drug offenders the chance to earn a high school diploma and find employment." (source govtrack.us)

Over the course of her nearly two terms in office, Mrs. Harris won a \$25-billion settlement for California homeowners hit by the foreclosure crisis, defended California's landmark climate change law, protected the Affordable Care Act, helped win marriage equality for all Californians, and prosecuted transnational gangs that trafficked in guns, drugs, and human beings."

"She became a US Senator in 2017. She was one of eight Democrats to vote against the passage of a trade agreement between the United States, Mexico and Canada that would replace the North American Free-Trade Agreement.

"She supported Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders' single-payer bill and Medicare for all. She also proposed a prescription drug plan that would allow setting a fair price no higher than 100 percent of the average price for that drug." Harris supports banning hydraulic fracking, but that's far from her only energy or environment proposal. She co-sponsored a bill to prohibit offshore drilling in federal waters and in the Atlantic Ocean.

"Her first bill introduced as a senator was designed to make sure that people detained by

Customs and Border Protection at ports of entry into the United States have access to legal representation."

(source govtrack.us)

"Mike Pence was the governor of Indiana from 2013 to 2017. Prior to that he served as a U.S. Congressman from 2001 to 2013. As a governor, he initiated the largest tax cut in Indiana's history. He also signed a bill to restrict abortion" Pence is pro-life and believes in Christian values. During his tenure as governor, Pence supported significant increases in education funding to pre-schools, voucher programs, and charter schools.

"As a governor, Pence inherited a 2 billion dollars budget deficit. Later he pressed for a balanced budget amendment to the state's constitution. He is a defender of the Second Amendment and supports NRA." (Source: [In.gov](http://In.gov))

As a VP, Pence gained foreign policy experience. On February 5, 2017, Pence warned Iran not to test the resolve of the new Trump administration following their ballistic missile tests. Pence made several trips to Asia-Pacific region meeting with North Korean and Japanese leaders in an effort to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

On February 26, 2020, President Trump named Pence as the leader of the White House Coronavirus Task Force to combat the spread of the corona virus. Though he has worked relentlessly to combat the virus, the jury is still out on his effectiveness.

As I said earlier, who becomes VP is very important this time. Please give your consideration to this matter and use your judgment.