

1793

Louis XVI of France is executed by the guillotine in Paris, following his conviction for high treason

1952

Jawaharlal Nehru's Congress party wins general election in India



1968

The Battle of Khe Sanh - one of the most publicized and controversial battles of the Vietnam War - begins at the Khe Sanh Air Base

2008

Black Monday in worldwide stock markets. FTSE 100 had its biggest ever one-day points fall, European stocks closed with their worst result since 9/11, and Asian stocks drop as much as 15%.

ation in crisis, uilds on Biden

With that, Biden is under significant pressure to turn his pledges of unity and competence into results - and swiftly.

"He has to stay focused on vaccine distribution and solving the 'last mile' problem," said Joe Trippi, a veteran Democratic strategist. "Failure is not an option. Losing that focus is not an option."

Biden wants Congress to move quickly. His team believes the most effective way to lower the political temperature is through results, not rhetoric - specifically, passage of the \$1.9 trillion virus relief package that Biden has proposed as a first step in stabilizing the economy, opening schools and ramping up vaccinations nationwide.

The public wants to see a functional government deliver, a Biden adviser said, adding that plenty of Trump voters have been hurt by the pandemic.

"There is a path out of this darkness," another Biden adviser said, "but we will need support from Congress."

Unlike other newly elected presidents,

Biden will have no crowds to rally him. Instead, he will be sworn in with historic Washington resembling an armed camp, the streets deserted due to the twin dangers of civil unrest and COVID-19.

Douglas Brinkley, a presidential historian at Rice University, likened Biden's inauguration to Abraham Lincoln's in 1861, when the United States was on the brink of the Civil War and the new president faced assassination threats.

"The smell of violence was in the air," Brinkley said.

The nation is not on that kind of precipice, Brinkley added. But the Capitol siege will cloud the early days of Biden's presidency. After being impeached by the US House of Representatives on a charge of inciting the Jan. 6 assault on the

Capitol, Trump faces a Senate trial that threatens to derail Biden's agenda from the very start and delay confirmation votes for his executive branch nominees.

Stand and deliver

Biden enters the White House with more of a tailwind than Trump enjoyed. He has the approval of a little more than half the country - 53%, according to Reuters/Ipsos polling, while Trump came into office four years ago at 46%.

Biden's willingness to work with Congress "is a departure from where we have been the last four years, and I think it would go a long way toward helping people catch their breath," said Mo Elleithee, executive director of the Georgetown University Institute for Politics and Public Service, which conducted its own poll on civility in government. Trump, a neophyte as a politician, stood at odds with the legislative process, often refusing to lay out his own priorities in negotiations. He struggled to harness the power of government to achieve his policy goals.

Biden, conversely, spent 35 years as a senator from Delaware before serving eight years as Barack Obama's vice president.

Yet Biden will have to contend with narrow Democratic majorities in the House and Senate, which will leave him little maneuvering room.

In the House, Speaker Nancy Pelosi will be pressured by progressives in her caucus to keep the relief package as far-ranging as possible. The relationship between Biden and the Senate Republican leader, Mitch McConnell, will be tested early. McConnell has an incentive to work with Biden on virus relief, said Doug Heye, a former official at the Republican National Committee.

Kremlin says Biden's efforts to extend New START arms control treaty

Reuters | Moscow

The Kremlin said yesterday it remained committed to extending the New START nuclear arms control treaty with the United States and would welcome efforts promised by the administration of US President-elect Joe Biden to reach agreement.

The New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) accord, which was signed in 2010 and expires in February, limits the numbers of strategic nuclear warheads, missiles and bombers that Russia and the United States can deploy.

"Russia and its president are in favour of preserving this agreement," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on a conference call. "If our American colleagues will in fact demonstrate a political will to preserve this pact by extending it, this can only be welcomed."



Narendra Modi @narendramodi



My warmest congratulations to @JoeBiden on his assumption of office as President of the United States of America. I look forward to working with him to strengthen India-US strategic partnership. Congratulations to @KamalaHarris on being sworn-in as @VP. It is a historic occasion. Looking forward to interacting with her to make India-USA relations more robust. The India-USA partnership is beneficial for our planet.

The India-US partnership is based on shared values. We have a substantial and multifaceted bilateral agenda, growing economic engagement and vibrant people to people linkages. Committed to working with President @JoeBiden to take the India-US partnership to even greater heights.

British PM Boris Johnson, Speaking in Parliament



"I look forward to working with him (Biden), and with his new administration, strengthening the partnership between our countries and working on our shared priorities: from tackling climate change, building back better from the pandemic and strengthening our transatlantic security."

Ursula von der Leyen @vonderleyen



The United States is back. And Europe stands ready. To reconnect with an old and trusted partner, to breathe new life into our cherished alliance. I look forward to working together with @JoeBiden

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in a video statement



"Today is a good day for democracy. In the United States of America, it has faced tremendous challenges - and endured. Despite the attempts to tear at America's institutional fabric, election workers and governors, the judiciary and Congress, have proven strong. I am greatly relieved that, today, Joe Biden is being sworn in as president and will be moving into the White House. I know many people in Germany share this feeling."

Greta Thunberg @GretaThunberg

He seems like a very happy old man looking forward to a bright and wonderful future. So nice to see!



Lil Wayne, Kodak Black



Lil Wayne



Steve Bannon

pardon in August 2017, his first year in office, had issued 70 in total before Wednesday, many of which have been given to people who are friendly with his administration.

Trump's pardons have also included some people tied to celebrities, including Alice Marie Johnson, a woman convicted on drug charges whose case was championed by reality television star Kim Kardashian West.

In 2019, Trump sought to intervene when A\$AP Rocky was detained in Sweden after a brawl in downtown Stockholm. The rapper, whose legal name is Rakim Mayers, and two members of his entourage were charged with assault causing bodily harm.

Mayers said he had acted in self-defense after his bodyguard was attacked and was released

from custody in August.

Trump also said he had given a full pardon to a former Google engineer sentenced for stealing a trade secret on self-driving cars months before he briefly headed Uber Technologies Inc's rival unit. Anthony Levandowski, 40, was sentenced in August to 18 months in prison after pleading guilty in March. He was not in custody but a judge had said he could enter custody once the COVID-19 pandemic subsided.

The White House said Levandowski had "paid a significant price for his actions and plans to devote his talents to advance the public good."

Levandowski transferred more than 14,000 Google files, including development schedules and product designs, to his personal laptop before he left, and while negotiating a new role with Uber.



TOP
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TWEETS

01



It's a new day in America.

@JoeBiden

02



A new chapter begins today. Tune in now for #Inauguration2021 as @JoeBiden

and I are sworn in to office and set our nation on a new path forward.

@KamalaHarris

03



Joe Biden will inherit it from Trump: The worst economy since the Great Depression, the worst public health crisis in 100 years, massive wealth inequality, the existential threat of climate change, a racist immigration system. These unprecedented crises demand unprecedented action.

@BernieSanders

04



Congratulations to my friend, President @JoeBiden! This is your time.

@BarackObama

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