

Howdy, Modi!

SHARED DREAMS, BRIGHT FUTURES.

Prime Minister of India and President of the United States address packed NRG Stadium at “Howdy, Modi!”

September 29, 2019 – Houston: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump addressed a historic crowd of approximately 50,000 at the NRG Stadium in Houston on Sunday, September 22nd at the "Howdy, Modi"! community summit hosted by the Texas India Forum. The summit was broadcast live to an estimated audience of 500 million people in English, Hindi, and Spanish and marked a defining moment in India-America ties. The attendance of both leaders symbolized an ever-strengthening partnership between the world's largest and oldest democracies, India and the United States. Over 30 elected representatives across parties, including Governors, Senators and House Representatives witnessed this historic event with the two leaders.

In his introduction of the President of the United States, Prime Minister Modi said, “Mr. President, this morning, in Houston, you can hear the heartbeat of this great partnership in this celebration of the world’s two largest democracies. You can feel the strength and depth of human bonds between our two great nations.”

President Trump responded with equal enthusiasm: “I’ve come to express my profound gratitude to the nearly 4 million amazing Indian Americans, all across our country. You enrich our culture, you uphold our values, you uplift our communities, and you are truly proud to be American. And we are proud to have you as Americans.”

Preceding the speeches of the two leaders, a 90-minute cultural extravaganza titled “Woven”, co-produced by Mela Arts Connect with the support of the local arts community, showcased the rich diversity and culture of Indians in America.

The President stressed the importance of forging strong US-India defense and security partnership and extended his support for India’s determination to protect its borders and fight terrorism.

Republican Senators from Texas John Cornyn and Ted Cruz, and Democratic House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer spoke before the President took the stage. They spoke of India’s rich history, current stature in the global stage, and the contribution of Indian-Americans to the United States.

When Prime Minister Modi took the stage, he started his speech by saying: “The energy of NRG bears testimony to the growing synergy of India and the United States of America”.

He also stressed that unity and diversity is India's heritage and is what makes it unique. "This diversity of India is the very basis of our vibrant democracy. This is our strength, and this is our inspiration. Wherever we go, we take with us the values of diversity and democracy."

The Indian PM emphasized that his country was impatient to develop at a much faster pace than ever

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before. "From getting a cooking gas connection, to obtaining a passport, to road connectivity, to cost of data, India has made phenomenal progress," he noted.

PM Modi's speech highlighted a resurgent and confident India, focused on removing barriers and uplifting society by reaping the benefits of modern technology, strong leadership, and a fundamental commitment to democracy. He stated that India is today a global power, whose 1.3 billion population is determined to be the best in the world in every sphere and as their leader, he is determined to realize that ambition. He also gave a clear and unequivocal message to fight terrorism and its sponsors, in partnership with America.

The community summit, in the end, emphasized the strong ties between the people of the United States and India, and it reaffirmed the strategic partnership between the world's oldest and largest democracies.

"Howdy, Modi!" has stands as a testament to the strong Indian-American community, which came together in Texas with over 1400 volunteers and 650 welcome partners to produce an unprecedented community-led event.

"Indian Americans have proven beyond doubt that we can organize in unprecedented ways to shape history and unite nations. The aspirations of a young Indian today are no different than the aspiration of a young American. They both take pride in their democracy and its values of liberty, justice, and equality to fulfill their shared dreams for a brighter future. This event highlighted these common aspirations to prove that what unites us is far greater than what divides us," said Gitesh Desai, spokesperson for the Texas India Forum.