



# The Indian Americans Who Rallied at Capitol Hill

The Indian and the Confederate flags were flying together during the recent storming of Capitol Hill.

**Michaela Stone Cross**

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The Indian Flag at Capitol Hill on January 6, 2021 (via Twitter)

The Confederate flag was not the only flag flying at the Capitol Hill rally, as a mob stormed the government building, terrorizing government workers and the nation itself. Reports coming through social media indicate that some participants were flying the Indian flag, drawing national and international attention.

“Lest you think this was an all-white mob, there are Indian-American supporters of the president who took part...” [tweeted](#) New York journalist Arun Venugopal, sharing a text exchange he claimed was from an “ecstatic” supporter. Photos have emerged of Indian Americans sporting Indian flags, MAGA (“Make America Great Again”) hats, and “Stop the Steal” posters.



Trump supporters posing in front of the FBI Building on 1/6/2021 (via Twitter)

“Make America Great Again,” after all, is an ironic motto for immigrants to rally under, considering the America to which Trump refers is one that didn’t let Indians in. But Indian American attendees of the rally are defending their actions, claiming that the protest was otherwise “peaceful,” and citing “widespread voter fraud,” as their reason for attending.

“Trump rallies are always a lot of fun” [wrote](#) Indian American Trump



Trump rallies are always a lot of fun, ~~and~~ Indian American Trump supporter Vincent Xavier in a public Facebook statement. “And TODAY was not an exception. About 50 or so lawless people who breached the US Capitol perimeter by climbing the walls, breaking the windows and attacking police inside this sacred temple to American Democracy is not a reason to throw the million plus peaceful protestors under the bus. I was one among them and violence was not our agenda or our action. We were indeed peaceful citizens who wanted to show up and tell our elected representatives something. We believe that extensive voter fraud had happened, and they should do anything in their capacity to rectify the mistake.”

According to Quint, Xavier is a Malayali Christian who previously ran anti-communist campaigns in his state of Kerala. (*The Juggernaut* reached out to Xavier for comment but he did not respond. Others who attended the rally have taken down social media posts, fearing legal action.)



Indian Americans sporting "Make America Great Again" apparel (via Twitter)

“We have never seen such chaotic conditions in the US...” wrote Dr. Sampat Shivangi, another Indian American Republican. “But Trump has supported Indian Americans by denouncing those who opposed CAA...I am grateful to him.”

“Among Indians [Americans], there's a lot of attention given to Modi-supporting Hindus who love Trump, but internally, there is a real rift between that camp and Hindus who embrace Modi but reject Trump,” said Venugopal to *The Juggernaut*. “That's in part because some Hindus worry that Biden-Harris will take a hard stand against the CAA or Kashmir. Some members of this contingent also thinks Hindus should not be campaigning for Muslim candidates in America. The question is whether these differences will remain behind closed doors or eventually spill out into the open, especially in the wake of the disastrous insurrection in D.C.”

Representative [Pramila Jayapal](#) (WA-07), an Indian American member of Congress and leader of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, has been vocal on social media. “Trump incited and fueled this violent assault on our Capitol and our democracy that was carried out by domestic terrorists—many associated with white nationalist groups—with the intent to overturn the election,” she [tweeted](#). “Congress must reconvene immediately and remove this president.”

The vast majority (around [72%](#)) of Indian Americans are Biden supporters, but Trump receives a certain amount of support for his stance against [China](#), which has shown increasing militancy along many South Asian borders; for his refusal to condemn India's actions in Kashmir; and for his show of friendship toward Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Coming from a country that has often been snubbed by the global superpower, many Indians appreciated America's willingness to distance itself from Pakistan and grow closer to India during Trump's administration.

“Some people flatly told me, ‘I didn't vote for Democrats this time, because Trump was good for India,’” said Vinai Thummalapally, a former member of the Obama administration who campaigned in the Georgia run-offs. “They would say, ‘I don't think Biden's going to be as good because Biden doesn't support India the way Trump did,’ things like that.”

"A lot of people wonder why non-white Americans show up at these

overwhelmingly white displays of power, or why they align with the Republican party in the first place,” Venugopal told *The Juggernaut*. “...In some cases, we should remember that it's much easier to advance or simply stand out as a person of color in the GOP than it is a Democrat, which is a much more crowded field, with its 'big tent' approach.”



**Varun Gandhi** ✓  
@varungandhi80

ooo

Why is there an Indian flag there??? This is one fight we definitely don't need to participate in...



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Varun Gandhi, member of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha (via Twitter)

The participation of Indian Americans in this past week's storming of Capitol Hill has generated a great deal of interest in South Asia, where news sites and **commentators** are covering the strange alliance that brought white

supremacists and immigrants together.

“Unfortunately... there are some Indians with the same mentality as that Trumpist mob, who enjoy using the flag as a weapon rather than a badge of pride, & denounce all who disagree with them as anti-nationals & traitors,” responded Indian Parliament member Shashi Tharoor in one [tweet](#). “That flag there is a warning to all of us.”

*Michaela Stone Cross is a staff writer at The Juggernaut.*

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Good



Great

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