

Barack Obama's statement about Diwali celebration at the White House and Capitol Hill, held on November 5, 2013:

For the Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists celebrating Diwali this weekend, the Festival of Lights reaffirms the things in life that matter most. Dancing, celebration, and good food remind us that life's greatest joys are the simple pleasures that come from spending time with people we love. Contemplation and prayer remind us that that people of all faiths have an obligation to perform seva, or service to others. And the flame of the diya, or lamp, reminds us that light will ultimately triumph over darkness.

Here in the United States, Diwali also reminds us that our nation is home to many faiths and traditions, and that our diversity makes us stronger, which is why I'm proud that this year Democrats and Republicans in Congress joined together for the first-ever celebration of Diwali on Capitol Hill. Over the last five years, Michelle and I have been honored to have the chance to observe this ancient holiday, both at the White House and in India, and we wish all those celebrating this weekend a Happy Diwali.