

TOWARDS RACIAL JUSTICE: ON GEORGE FLOYD CASE VERDICT

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights Issues - Human Rights and NHRC

A U.S. judge found Derek Chauvin, a Minneapolis police officer, [guilty of murdering an unarmed African-American man, George Floyd](#), an incident last May that ignited a nationwide storm of protest against police brutality and a worldwide outpouring of anger at America's racial injustice. Mr. Chauvin has been [convicted of second-degree and third-degree murder, and manslaughter](#) — all three for an encounter that lasted around nine minutes, during which he pinned Mr. Floyd's neck to the roadside with his knee until he stopped breathing. [Mr. Floyd's final words, "I can't breathe"](#), became the clarion call of a massive wave of street protests across the U.S. At the time, erstwhile President Donald Trump fanned outrage when he described the protests a result of the "radical left" and threatened to send in the National Guard. President Joe Biden, at the time a presidential race frontrunner, contrarily went to Houston to meet with Mr. Floyd's relatives. He said at the time that he would not "fan the flames of hate", but instead, "seek to heal the racial wounds that have long plagued this country". A few months ahead of one of the most remarkable presidential elections in recent history, his words lent hope to many Americans that should he win, there might be a real possibility for reform in law enforcement and criminal justice that could result in less violence against racial minorities.

Yet, it is clear that the road towards achieving a more perfect union is laden with pitfalls that render the task at hand formidable. Literally minutes before the verdict in the Chauvin trial, a teenage girl in Columbus, Ohio, was killed by the police. Her death comes in the wake of others felled in police encounters, including [Eric Garner](#), [Michael Brown](#) and [Tamir Rice](#) in 2014, and [Breonna Taylor](#) in 2020, to name but a few. In most such cases, charges have been rare, and convictions rarer still. Analysis of these cases suggested that most often charges were dropped, or plea bargains and civil settlements agreed. It is only a minority of these instances of what many consider police brutality against people of colour that result in convictions at trial. Four years under Mr. Trump did little to build, across communities, bridges of the sort necessary to bring about a greater measure of empathy and nuance in policing. Now, Mr. Biden's ambitious police reform bill, which bans chokeholds, offers qualified immunity from lawsuits for law enforcement and creates national standards for policing towards greater accountability, has cleared the House and faces a steep climb at the Senate, where analysts say it is unlikely to pass without the support of at least some Republicans. If some of these Republicans can eschew unproven allegations about Democrats seeking to "defund the police" that will be a good start.

Please enter a valid email address.

From the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, to the landmark Ayodhya verdict, 2019 proved to be an eventful year.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com