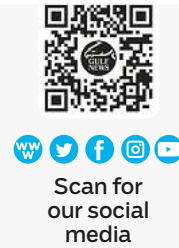


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Kamala Harris speaks during an event honouring National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) championship teams on the South Lawn of the White House yesterday.

## Harris occupies pole position as Democrats seek new candidate

US vice-president  
wins key Pelosi  
support for  
White House race

**DUBAI**  
**BY STEPHEN N. R.**  
Senior Associate Editor

With limited time and tensions running high within the Democratic Party following President Joe Biden's exit from the 2024 US Presidential race, many congressional Democrats have swiftly rallied around Vice-President Kamala Harris as their preferred candidate for the top spot on the ticket.

Securing Biden's endorsement, the 59-year-old Harris quickly garnered support from a wave of Democratic leaders on her inaugural day of campaigning, commencing with an event at the White House.

The strongest support has come from none other than

the Democratic heavyweight Nancy Pelosi. "I have full confidence that she [Harris] will lead us to victory in November," said Pelosi on X.

### Governors' endorsement

Influential governors, previously seen as potential contenders for the party's presidential nomination, also joined ranks in backing her candidacy.

"Let's win this," Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer declared, announcing her endorsement alongside governors from Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

"This is a sprint," said California Senator Laphonza Butler, a close ally of Harris, in an interview to Bloomberg.

"She is reaching out to ensure that everyone understands her commitment: that she is prepared to earn this nomination."

Biden's record is "unmatched in modern history," Harris said at the White House event. "In one term, he has already surpassed the legacy

of most presidents who have served two terms in office."

A child of immigrant parents, her father was from Jamaica and her mother from India, Harris grew up in Oakland, California, in an activist household that saw her attend her first rallies in a stroller.

### Unique opportunity

As America's first female, Black, and South Asian vice president, Harris faces a unique opportunity to unite the party following 81-year-old Biden's historic decision to step aside.

The development has injected new vigour into a demoralised party, transforming an election that was shaping up to be a prolonged contest between two unpopular, elderly men and potentially paving the way for America's first female president.

Harris's campaign reported an impressive \$49.6 million in grassroots donations within less than 24 hours of Biden endorsing her.

SEE ALSO P10

## 3 Bangladeshi rioters in UAE given life term

53 OTHERS GET 10 YEARS WHILE ONE GETS 11 YEARS; ALL TO BE DEPORTED

**ABU DHABI**  
**BY KHITAM AL AMIR**  
Chief News Editor

The Abu Dhabi Federal Court of Appeal on Sunday sentenced 57 Bangladeshi nationals, who gathered and incited riots in several streets across the UAE on Friday. The court sentenced three of the accused to life imprisonment for calling for demonstrations and inciting riots to pressure their home government. Another 53 defendants received ten-year prison terms, with one, who entered the country illegally and participated in the riot, being sentenced to eleven years.

### Devices confiscated

The court also ordered their deportation at the end of their prison terms and the confiscation of all seized devices.

This ruling follows an immediate investigation and referral to an expedited trial, as directed by Chancellor Dr. Hamad Saif Al Shamsi, UAE Attorney-General.

The defendants were brought to trial after an investigation led by a team of 30 investigators confirmed their involvement in

gathering in public, inciting unrest, disrupting public security, and promoting such gatherings and protests, including recording and disseminating audio-visual footage of these actions online. Several of the defendants confessed to the crimes with which they were accused.

During the trial, covered by the media, the Public Prosecution demanded the maximum penalty for the accused.

According to a statement released by the prosecution on Saturday, the protesters disrupted transport services and caused damage to both public and private property. The statement also noted that the suspects called for the demonstrations, recorded videos of the events, and uploaded them online.

On Saturday, the UAE Attorney-General has ordered an immediate investigation and trial for Bangladeshi expatriates charged with rioting, disruption, and damaging property.

Earlier, several Bangladeshi nationals were arrested for protesting against their home government and were investigated by a team from the Public Prosecution.

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