



# US ELECTIONS 2016

ISSUE 6 | JANUARY 2016

## An ORF Monthly Monitor

### EDITORIAL NOTE

As the United States swings into election mode, ORF has begun to closely monitor the developments. We bring news updates; commentaries; opinion polls as well as statements, speeches and interviews by the Presidential candidates. We also look at role of the Indian Diaspora and its positions on various issues and explore the potential implications of the elections for India. We welcome your feedback and comments.

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### Trump: the GOP's George McGovern?

Rajesh Rajagopalan

In 1972, the Democratic party leadership in the US was shocked when its preferred candidate, Ed Muskie, lost the Democratic nomination race badly to the controversial, far-left George McGovern after a chaotic primary process and an out-of-control National Convention (where the party nominee is formally named). So unhappy was the Democratic establishment that many senior Democrats refused McGovern's invitation to join his ticket in the Vice Presidential slot. Despite President Nixon leading an unpopular war, McGovern's radical views and a deeply divided Democratic party led to Nixon winning by one of the biggest landslides in American presidential history. The Republican establishment in 2016 could end up facing much the same situation as the Democratic establishment did in 1972 – a nightmare primary election that ends with the nomination of a radical who appeals to a narrow, extremist base within the party leading to certain disaster in November, even against a Democrat like Hillary Clinton who herself is quite unpopular.

Will Donald Trump become the George McGovern of the Republican Party? Maybe not. At this stage, all we have are very unreliable [polls](#), and only a few of these are from the crucial early-primary states. But all of them indicate that Donald Trump is the front-runner in the Republican national popularity contest, though Senator Ted Cruz leads in Iowa. This is despite the fact that Trump has said little that is specific or serious about [policy issues](#) other than exhortations ('Make America Great Again'), outlandish schemes (building a wall on the US-Mexican border) and serial abuse of other candidates or anyone who annoys him (too numerous to mention). His solution to the heroin epidemic sweeping New Hampshire is [a good representation](#) of his lackadaisical approach to serious policy problems: "That whole heroin thing," he said a few days back in New Hampshire, "I tell you what, we gotta get that whole thing under control." His bullying antics have led some conservatives – who fear him for the harm he might do to the GOP in 2016 – to name him "[Biff Trump](#)", the bully billionaire from the *Back to the Future* movies.

If recent US primary elections are any guide, presidential candidates who hope to be their party's nominee have to win one of the crucial early primaries in Iowa or New

Hampshire. In 2012, in the Republican primary, Mitt Romney lost Iowa but won New Hampshire. In the 2008 Republican primary, John McCain also lost Iowa and won New Hampshire, while in the Democratic primary, Barack Obama won both (though he was tied with Hillary Clinton in popular votes in New Hampshire, he won more delegates there). In 2004, though opinion polls had favoured Howard Dean, John Kerry won both states. In 2000, in the Republican primary, George W. Bush won Iowa though he lost New Hampshire to John McCain, while on the Democratic side, Al Gore won both. We have to go back to the 1992 Democratic primaries (won by Bill Clinton) to find a case of a candidate who lost in both the Iowa and New Hampshire but still managed to win the party nomination. But then again, whether this primary will follow recent history is anybody's guess.

The reason for the importance of these two states in the primary process is simple: though small states with small number of delegates, victory in either state could give momentum to a candidate, even one not considered a front-runner, just as a stumble here could scuttle a front-runner, as Howard Dean (2004) and to a lesser extent, Hillary Clinton (2008) found out. Money and support tends to flow to the winners, weaker candidates drop out and the race tightens, even if it does not necessarily end. The outsized importance of these two states has been a problem especially for larger more important states that conduct primaries later because the party presidential nominee is usually (though not always) clear by the time the primaries reach them.

Can any moderate Republican such as Senator Marco Rubio hope to win the party nomination after losing Iowa and New Hampshire to radicals like Trump or Ted Cruz? Difficult but not impossible, [some suggest](#). The Republican primary is so unusual this time that most of the traditional political rule-books are out of the window. Trump, for example, has fashioned a unique campaign that seems based on [dominating the news cycle](#): as the Democratic political strategist David Axelrod put it, he has turned the media into his own advertising vehicle. Trump, though a billionaire, has been able to run with almost no funding; he has very little by way of contributions – he is not soliciting in any case – but he is not putting much of his own money into the campaign either. He is coasting with free publicity because of his outrageous antics on TV and some smart scheduling. For example, he was the only one to schedule a campaign speech the day before the last Republican debate in Las Vegas, while other candidates were presumably busy

preparing for the debate. But that also meant that TV news channels like CNN covered a big chunk of his speech, giving him free publicity.

On the other hand, the big question that will only be answered on February 1 (when the Iowa caucuses takes place) and February 9 (New Hampshire primary) is whether Trump's [general popularity](#) will translate into primary votes. Only small numbers of dedicated party supporters tend to vote in primaries and the peculiarities of the caucus system, where supporters vote at local party offices at a specified time, makes it difficult for candidates who do not have strong local organizations. According to multiple reports, [Trump appears](#) not to have a very capable [organization](#) on the [ground](#) (though he has [claimed](#) he does) and instead seems to be relying on his own charisma. There is no way to know until Iowa and New Hampshire Republicans vote.

It is quite possible that Trump could lose in Iowa, where Ted Cruz leads the polls, but win in New Hampshire. But even if he wins both (or especially if he wins both) it is very possible that the Republican establishment would coalesce around a mainstream candidate such as Rubio. Trump and the rise of [angry right-wing demagoguery](#) scares the Republican establishment more than anyone else. William Kristol, editor of the conservative *Weekly Standard* even [suggested](#), only semi-seriously, that conservatives will need to start a new political party if Trump wins the nomination and tweeted for suggestions about naming the new party. Many are convinced that even the relatively more moderate Ted Cruz [might not win](#) in a general election. George F. Will, another leading conservative, called Trump a 'national embarrassment' and [argued](#) that the highest priority for Conservatives is to prevent Trump from winning the Republican nomination, failing which the Conservative movement itself might fail. With the Jeb Bush campaign going nowhere, most Conservatives appear to hope that Rubio, who can bring in the crucial Latino vote and possibly other minorities and women, might save them still.

Such appears to be Rubio's strategy too. Losing both in Iowa and New Hampshire does not have to end Rubio's run if he can put in a strong showing in either or both of these states. Rubio is currently running a distant third in Iowa but is within striking distance of Trump in New Hampshire. But even with the Republican establishment and the Conservative ideological leaders supporting him, it would still be difficult for Rubio if he does not do very well in both Iowa and New Hampshire. As of now, Rubio faces [problems in New Hampshire](#) because he has not worked the state enough (though that might change in January) and multiple moderate Republicans threaten to divide the votes and leave Trump and Cruz on top.

The Trump danger does not end there, of course. Even if he fails to get the Republican nomination, Trump could decide to run as an independent, despite pledging to support the eventual Republican nominee. He might not win the general election, but just as Ross Perot's independent presidential bid in 1996, he could pull enough votes out of the Republican candidate to ensure a Democratic party victory.

After the McGovern disaster, the Democrats did win the 1976 elections with Jimmy Carter, but it was an aberration. In ideological terms, it took the Democrats two decades to recover from ideological excesses of the 1970s that McGovern represented. It required the electoral deftness of Bill Clinton and the ideological pragmatism of the [Democratic Leadership Council](#) (DLC). The Republican establishment wanted to move to the pragmatic center after 2012 election, much as the Democratic establishment had wanted after the 1968 campaign. But from the perspective of the radicals within their parties, it was the party establishment itself that was the problem. It is too early to say whether the Republicans, who are generally more pragmatic than Democrats, will go down the same rabbit hole in 2016 that the Democrats did in 1972. But the unresolved [civil war within the GOP](#) portends serious difficulties ahead for the party.

**(Rajesh Rajagopalan is Professor of International Politics, Jawaharlal Nehru University)**

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### **The United States Presidential Elections in 2016: What to Expect?**

**Sylvia Mishra**

As we enter into 2016, anticipation and speculations are rife among political analysts and commentators on the trends and developments that are likely to dominate the presidential race in the coming year. From the start of 2015, presidential hopefuls on both the Democratic and Republican side have been working vigorously on their respective campaigns – declaring their agenda, raising funds and cultivating supports. By now the voters are well acquainted with the policy positions taken by the US presidential hopefuls on various issues. However, the race has only begun as the bulk of the campaigning is due to take place next year. Looking ahead the year 2016 would be critical for assessment of candidates' position on domestic and foreign policy issues instead of polarizing comments and verbal attacks on opponents.

One of the emerging trends for 2016 elections – which are also substantiated by [opinion polls and surveys](#) – is that elections are going to be dominated by foreign policy issues. Economic concerns have traditionally dominated elections and would continue to remain one of the most important issues for 2016 as well. However, with the positive trend of the US economy doing well and bouncing back with unemployment rate down to [5.5 percent](#), economic concerns that dominated the 2008 and 2012 presidential races are seemingly less critical in 2016. In its place presidential hopefuls' ability to address complex global challenges such as countering Islamic state militants in Syria and Iraq, managing Iran, diffusing the crisis in Ukraine and the rise of China has assumed critical importance. Leading candidates from both sides of the spectrum have come out with roadmaps on how to fight ISIS.

Calling the ISIS activities in the Middle East as [genocide](#), Hillary Clinton announced a three-pronged [strategy](#) to defeat ISIS – defeating ISIS in Syria and Iraq and across the Middle East; disrupting and dismantling the growing terrorist infrastructure that facilitates the flow of fighters, financing arms and propaganda around the world; and hardening American and allies defenses against external and homegrown threats. Jeb Bush similarly put forward his plans of defeating the ISIS and additionally, [proposed](#) that American troops need to be embedded in the Iraqi military. While candidates have all in their own ways tried to lay down strategies how their administrations would defeat the ISIS, none of the candidates seems to have a vision which is starkly different from what the Obama administration has been doing. Apart from debates on American engagement in the Middle East, the Asia-Pacific especially the management of relations with China is another issue that has gained attention from the candidates.

Most Republican candidates have taken a position which is mostly belligerent towards China. As China remains an important election issue, Senator Marco Rubio has [stated](#) that America needs to stop a policy of appeasement towards China as being followed by the Obama administration despite China's mounting aggressions. While suggesting cooperation with China when possible, Rubio mentioned that if elected he would approach China on the basis of strength and example and not weakness and appeasement. On the Democratic side, Bernie Sanders has hinged his campaign to a great extent talking about the economic woes of America's middle class. His [policy towards China](#) also stems from the fact that free trade with China has only hurt American workers. In turn, it has enriched big Wall Street corporations and has been detrimental to the environment. Sanders claims that over two million American jobs have been outsourced to China

since 2001. While presidential candidates' debate these foreign policy goals, mounting attack from the Republicans has come to the Democrats for following a weak immigration policy. In 2015, political space was crowded with issues of immigration being discussed and debated among the candidates.

In spite of polarizing comments and making personal attacks, Donald Trump is likely to remain an important phenomenon of the 2016 elections. While it was speculated that his campaign would fizzle out by the end of 2015, Trump surprisingly has held on to his popularity ratings in the [polls](#) at 34%. However, it is highly unlikely that he would win the Republican Party's nomination as he has already earned a notorious reputation of being an anti-establishment candidate. The [entry](#) of another 'anti-establishment' candidate Ted Cruz has come as a surprise as Cruz has supplanted Ben Carson, Marco Rubio and Jeb Bush. In 2016, one could expect an intensification of rivalry between Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio whilst all the [leading surveys](#) conducted by CNN/ORC, Quinnipiac, FOX News, PPP (D) and ABC/Washington show Jeb Bush's consistently poor performance in spite of efforts to revamp his campaign. On the other side, the Democratic field is only getting narrower. In all the [surveys](#) conducted by Rasmussen Reports, CNN/ORC, Quinnipac, FOX News, ABC/Wash Post, PPP (D), Hillary Clinton has a huge lead over her opponents Sanders and O'Malley. Her popularity is only steadily rising although Bernie Sanders continues to give tough competition to Clinton. While the mood in the United States is shaping towards a tense political environment as Democrats and Republicans clash over the major issues with existing hyper-partisanship along party lines, [economists say](#) they are expecting the economy to be placid. A New York Times of leading economic forecasters showed that the majority of candidates are confident that unemployment rate would be at its lowest level since George W. Bush ran in 2000. In the coming year, all candidates will focus concerted efforts in laying out plans on how to deal with issues of terrorism, refugee crisis in Syria, protecting the environment and improving the US carbon footprint.

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(Sylvia Mishra is a Junior Fellow at ORF)

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### **The ISIS Threat and the Election Campaign Monish Tourangbam**

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, California, the ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) threat and debates over US response to the same has taken centre-stage in the primary campaigns. As



expected, a lot of what is coming out, especially from the Republican camp, is anti-incumbency in nature, meant to shoot down anything that President Barack Obama does and proposes as signs of weakness. However, apart from finding fault with President Obama's strategy against the ISIS, what are the candidates really saying, and are the things they say really different from what the President is doing or envisions to do while he is in office?

National security and foreign policy issues in election campaigns are often reflective of incidents either within the US or abroad. Besides debates regarding the nature of America's involvement in the fight against the ISIS, the issue of immigration regulation, especially regarding Syrian refugees has produced polarizing views. As far as the US strategy against the ISIS is concerned, most seem to agree on a more active involvement, mostly allying with those who have convergent interests, but stopping short of putting American boots on the ground.

Speaking at the Council on Foreign Relations, Hillary Clinton [called for](#) "a new phase" that includes "more allied planes" and "more strikes" on terrorist enclaves in Syria and Iraq. Calling for an "intensification" and "acceleration," of Obama's strategy, she vouched for augmenting air campaigns, ground efforts in Syria and Iraq, supported by greater intelligence support. Clinton's strategy also includes a no-fly zone over northern Syria. While she supported comprehensive background checks and intelligence gathering for the vetting process, she [commented](#) that "turning away orphans, applying a religious test, discriminating against Muslims, slamming the door on every single Syrian refugee" was not what America stood for.

Bernie Sanders speaking at Georgetown University wanted use of military force to be seen only as the last resort. Vouching for a broad coalition against the ISIS, [he said](#), "A new and strong coalition of Western powers, Muslim nations, and countries like Russia must come together in a strongly coordinated way to combat ISIS, to seal the borders that fighters are currently flowing across, to share counter-terrorism intelligence, to turn off the spigot of terrorist financing, and to end support for exporting radical ideologies."

[Donald Trump's proposal](#) to temporarily ban Muslims from entering the United States as a national security measure has, if nothing else, generated much heat and attracted widespread criticism, although he found takers among his supporters. His views have been slammed not only in the Democratic camp, but have not been appreciated by other Republican presidential contenders

either. Besides, Trump has publicly claimed that he would "just bomb those suckers." "I'd blow up the pipes, I'd blow up the refineries. Every single inch -- there would be nothing left," [he said](#). Speaking of Trump, John Fortier of the Bipartisan Policy Center [said](#), "He doesn't have a national security background and he says some things that are outrageous, but he still is playing into the worries, the worries broadly about immigration but more specifically the worries about security and terrorism that flow from that."

Ben Carson [intends](#) to use "every resource available" not "to contain" the ISIS but "to take them out completely." Moreover, Carson apparently likened some of the Syrian refugees to "rabid dogs" while expressing fear that some refugees might be linked to the ISIS. He called for a vetting of Syrian refugees and [said](#), "We must always balance. We must balance safety against just being a humanitarian." Although taking the often quoted line on the need for a global coalition and more responsibilities by Middle East allies in the fight against the ISIS, Jeb Bush also vouched for increased American presence on the ground. He left the number of troops to the recommendations of the military generals, but contended that air power was not enough though essential. Calling for a no-fly zone in Syria, [he criticized](#) the Obama administration for being "detached from reality" and having "no intention of victory." According to him, a successful strategy requires [arming the Kurdish forces in Iraq directly](#), something Marco Rubio has [also contended](#) saying that he would arm the Kurds directly than routing much of the assistance through the Iraqi government in Baghdad.

Rubio [argued](#) that the fight against the ISIS required an increase of US Special Forces in Syria that will supplement a majority Sunni ground force. According to him, defeating the ISIS militarily and ideologically called for an upgraded American effort, alongside coalition partners doing their part. Ted Cruz has also caused some unease by proposing that Christian refugees from Syria should be preferred for entry into the US, while calling it "lunacy" to allow Muslim refugees given the threat of their being aligned with the Islamic State. "There is no meaningful risk of Christians committing acts of terror. If there were a group of radical Christians pledging to murder anyone who had a different religious view than they, we would have a different national security situation," [said Cruz](#). Jeb Bush also propagated the view that Christians should be the focus of any assistance going to refugees in the Middle East.

Rand Paul believes that a major step forward towards fighting the ISIS would be to attack the source of their funding, especially targeting regimes in the Middle East which are presumably American allies. "From now on, our message to these governments and their ruling families must be clear: take accountability for your role in murdering our citizens or we will freeze your assets....Locate the citizens who are financing terrorism and lock them up or we won't sell you a single missile or fighter jet. The U.S. does not do business with terror financiers, period," [stressed Paul](#). Carly Fiorina has been found [attacking](#) President Obama, telling him to concentrate "his passion and energy" on America's real enemies, rather than "attacking Republicans."

Amidst accusations of being a weak leader and being indecisive in the fight against the ISIS, President Obama seems clear on his intent that while intensifying America's efforts, the US should not take dramatic steps in the wake of the Paris attacks [just to look tough](#). Airstrikes, arms to Kurdish and Arab militias, building coalitions are some of the major steps that candidates in the reckoning have called for but these are all part of the current administration's strategy. Besides, President Obama has also said that defeating the ISIS military and ideologically, and preventing lone-wolf attacks was going to be a long-term pursuit. The candidates are currently engaged in hyperbolic rhetoric and anti-incumbency criticism that are normal recipes of the campaign season. However, in most likelihood, whoever comes to the White House, will eventually take forward and tie the threads of what President Obama has already been doing and aims to do in his remaining days.

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## THE FIELD

### Democratic Party

#### Hillary Clinton

*Former Office:* US Secretary of State; Senator, New York

Campaign Site: [HillaryClinton.com](http://HillaryClinton.com)

PAC Site: [Priorities USA Action PAC](http://PrioritiesUSAActionPAC.com)

Independent PAC Site: [ReadyForHillary.com](http://ReadyForHillary.com)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/HillaryClinton](https://www.twitter.com/HillaryClinton)

#### Martin O'Malley

*Former Office:* Governor, Maryland

PAC Site: [O'Say Can You See PAC](http://OSayCanYouSeePAC.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MartinOMalley](https://www.facebook.com/MartinOMalley)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/GovernorOMalley](https://www.twitter.com/GovernorOMalley)

#### Bernie Sanders

*In office:* Senator, Vermont

Campaign Site: <https://berniesanders.com>

Government Site: [Office of US Senator Bernie Sanders](http://OfficeofUSSenatorBernieSanders.com)

Facebook

(Campaign): [www.facebook.com/FriendsOfBernie](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfBernie)

Facebook (Official): [www.facebook.com/SenatorSanders](https://www.facebook.com/SenatorSanders)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/SenSanders](https://www.twitter.com/SenSanders)

### Republican Party

#### Jeb Bush

*Former Office:* Governor, Florida

Official Site: <https://jeb2016.com>

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/JebBush](https://www.facebook.com/JebBush)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/JebBush](https://www.twitter.com/JebBush)

#### Ben Carson

*Profession:* Neurosurgeon

Official Site: [RealBenCarson.com](http://RealBenCarson.com)

PAC Site: [American Legacy PAC](http://AmericanLegacyPAC.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DrBenjaminCarson](https://www.facebook.com/DrBenjaminCarson)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/RealBenCarson](https://www.twitter.com/RealBenCarson)

#### Chris Christie

*In Office:* Governor, New Jersey

Official Site: <https://www.chrischristie.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DonaldTrump>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump>

Government Site: Office of Governor Chris Christie

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/GovChrisChristie](https://www.facebook.com/GovChrisChristie)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/GovChristie](https://www.twitter.com/GovChristie)

#### Ted Cruz

*In Office:* Senator, Texas

Official Site: [www.cruz.senate.gov](http://www.cruz.senate.gov)

Government Site: Office of US Senator Ted Cruz

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TedCruzPage](https://www.facebook.com/TedCruzPage)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/TedCruz](https://www.twitter.com/TedCruz)

#### Carly Fiorina

Profession: former businesswoman and CEO, Hewlett Packard

Official Site: <https://carlyforpresident.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CarlyFiorina/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CarlyFiorina>

#### Mike Huckabee

*Former Office:* Governor, Arkansas

Official Site: <https://www.mikehuckabee.com/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/GovMikeHuckabee>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mikehuckabee>

#### John Kasich

*In Office:* Governor, Ohio

Official Site: <https://johnk Kasich.com/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/JohnKasich>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JohnKasich>

#### Rand Paul

*Office:* Senator, Kentucky

Official Site: <https://www.randpaul.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RandPaul>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/randpaul>

#### Marco Rubio

*In Office:* Senator from Florida

Official site: <http://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MarcoRubio>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/marcorubio>

#### Donald Trump

*Profession:* Businessman

Official site: <https://www.donaldjtrump.com/>

## THE POLLS

**Table 1**

### 2016 Democratic Presidential Nomination

Polling Data							
Poll	Date	Sample	MoE	Clinton	Sanders	O'Malley	Spread
RCP Average	12/10 - 12/21	--	--	54.7	30.7	4.7	Clinton +24.0
Rasmussen Reports	12/20 - 12/21	546 LV	4.5	46	30	7	Clinton +16
CNN/ORC	12/17 - 12/21	414 RV	5.0	50	34	3	Clinton +16
Quinnipiac	12/16 - 12/20	462 RV	4.6	61	30	2	Clinton +31
FOX News	12/16 - 12/17	390 RV	5.0	56	34	2	Clinton +22
PPP (D)	12/16 - 12/17	525 LV	4.3	56	28	9	Clinton +28
ABC News/Wash Post	12/10 - 12/13	377 RV	5.5	59	28	5	Clinton +31
All 2016 Democratic Presidential Nomination Polling Data							

**Table 1** shows the leading candidates in the 2016 Democratic Presidential Nominations. In all the surveys conducted by Rasmussen Reports, CNN/ORC, Quinnipiac, FOX News, ABC/Wash Post, PPP (D), Hillary Clinton has a huge lead over her opponents Sanders and O'Malley. Her popularity is only steadily rising and the Democratic presidential field is getting narrower. In all likelihood Clinton would get her party's nomination.

Source: [www.realclearpolitics.com](http://www.realclearpolitics.com), 31 December, 2015

**Table 2**

### 2016 Republican Presidential Nomination

Polling Data															
Poll	Date	Trump	Cruz	Rubio	Carson	Christie	Bush	Paul	Fiorina	Kasich	Huckabee	Graham	Santorum	Pataki	Spread
RCP Average	12/10 - 12/21	35.6	18.6	11.6	9.4	4.6	4.4	2.6	2.2	1.8	1.8	0.6	0.6	0.0	Trump +17.0
CNN/ORC	12/17 - 12/21	39	18	10	10	5	3	4	1	2	2	1	0	0	Trump +21
Quinnipiac	12/16 - 12/20	28	24	12	10	6	4	2	2	1	1	0	1	0	Trump +4
FOX News	12/16 - 12/17	39	18	11	9	3	3	3	3	2	1	0	1	0	Trump +21
PPP (D)	12/16 - 12/17	34	18	13	6	5	7	2	4	2	4	1	1	0	Trump +16
ABC/WP	12/10 - 12/13	38	15	12	12	4	5	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	Trump +23
All 2016 Republican Presidential Nomination Polling Data															

**Table 2** indicates the popularity ratings of the 2016 Republican Presidential Nominees. The polling data reveals that on an average, Donald Trump has a lead cumulatively in surveys conducted by CNN/ORC, Quinnipiac, FOX News, PPP(D), ABC/Washington Post. Surprisingly, the entry of Ted Cruz in the second spot leading over Marco Rubio, Jeb Bush and Ben Carson is an interesting latest development. Jeb Bush's performance on the popularity chart has been consistently poor in spite of efforts to revamp his campaign. Rubio continues to give Cruz a tough competition.

Source: [www.realclearpolitics.com](http://www.realclearpolitics.com), 31 December 2015



## News 5 Interviews Ted Cruz

Texas Senator Ted Cruz was in Daphn for a rally as part of his '12 cities in 12 days' campaign event. Before he took the stage, he sat down for an exclusive interview with News 5.

News 5: What role does Alabama play in your campaign strategy?

Ted Cruz: "Alabama's going to play a critical role in the presidential election this year. You know, we begin as we always do with the first four states; Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Nevada. We've got amazing teams in those four states. I believe we're going to do very well there."

News 5: Many consider you to be the only 'true conservative' in the race. Realistically, do you think a true conservative can win the general election?

Ted Cruz: "Emily, I think that is the only way to win the general. If you look at recent history, over and over again, there are Washington consultants who tell the Republicans, 'you've got to nominate someone from the mushy middle. You've got to nominate a Democrat light.' And, every time we do it, we get whooped! We lose! And, the reason is because millions of conservatives stay home. We saw that in 2008. We saw that in 2012. Millions of evangelical Christian's, millions of Reagan Democrats, blue collars, Catholics, working class men and women stayed home. The only way we can win is to nominate a strong conservative who brings back to the polls the millions of conservatives who have been staying home."

While you've been on the campaign trail, what are the biggest issues you're hearing from voters?

"The single biggest issue is that people recognize we're on the wrong path. What we're doing isn't working economically. The Obama/Clinton Administration is a disaster. People are hurting in this country. You look at

home and our Federal Government is assaulting our constitutional rights. It's assaulting our free speech and our religious liberty. Religious liberty has never been more under assault than it is right now. Our Second amendment right to keep and bare arms!

I'll tell you, I think the number one issue in this election is keeping America safe. We saw in the wake of Paris and in the wake of San Bernardino, a president who is utterly oblivious. He's clueless. He doesn't understand what we're facing. He refuses to even say the words 'radical Islamic terrorism,' much less do what's needed to keep us safe. We need a commander in chief who will look evil in the eye and will defeat it. If I'm elected president, we will defeat radical Islamic terrorism. We will utterly destroy ISIS. We need a president who will keep us safe. I will do that."

**Accepting Syrian Refugees is a big debate right now, and this area here, Mobile, operates the only refugee center in Alabama. What is your stance on that?**

"I think President Obama's and Hillary Clinton's plan to bring tens of thousands of Syrian Refugees to this country...I think it's lunacy! It makes no sense whatsoever. The head of the FBI, appointed by Barrack Obama, told Congress that they cannot vet these refugees. As he put it, they have no information on who in Syria is part of ISIS, who's affiliated with the Jihadists. He said we could Query the database until the cows come home and there's no information there to check. And yet, Barrack Obama and Hillary Clinton, for matters of political correctness, are sticking their heads in the stand and saying 'bring them over anyway...' Even, when we know ISIS wants to use the refugees to murder us. The first obligation of the commander in chief should be to keep us safe. And, we have a President right now who's not going that.

**Speaking of Hillary Clinton, what do you think happens to this country if she's elected?**

"We risk losing the entire country. The stakes have never been higher than they are right now. I think we're at the edge of a cliff. We're looking down. In 7 years, our national debt has gone from 7 trillion to 18 trillion dollars. We're bankrupting our kids and grandkids. I'm convinced this next election, it's now or never. We

either pull back and get back to the principles that built this country or we risk losing the greatest country in the history of the world.”

**Hillary Clinton has criticized Alabama’s closure of more than 30 drivers license offices. She’s called it ‘a blast from the Jim Crow past’ and a violation of civil rights. What’s your reaction to the issue?**

“It’s not surprising to see a Democrat like Hillary Clinton coming in and attacking states, particularly Southern states. Frankly, it’s a bigotry from the Democrats. They look down on the southern states like we’re a bunch of hicks. Look, I’m from Texas and Hillary Clinton is not a big fan of my state either. We don’t need more politicians from Washington looking down on us like a fly-over company. We’ve had 7 years of a President who looks down on the American people. Hillary Clinton thinks we’re just a bunch ignorant rubes and we need to be governed by what she deems as moral and philosophical

Hillary Clinton thinks we’re just a bunch ignorant rubes, and we need to be governed by what she deems as moral and philosophical betters. I think that’s complete nonsense. I believe in the American people. I believe in the common sense values. You asked a minute ago, how you win nationally. Listen, Conservatives win nationally when we effectively articulate what we believe. Liberals win when they effectively hide what they believe. This country is and remains a ‘

**One last question. It wouldn’t be a complete interview without bringing up Donald Trump. How do you overpower him in the polls and the election?**

“I like Donald. There are a lot of folks in the mainstream media that have tried to drag Donald and me into a cage match, and I have repeatedly declined to give them what they want. I am glad Donald is running. He’s generated a lot of excitement and enthusiasm. I want every one of those folks that Donald has reached to stay energized and show up to vote in November 2016. That’s how we beat Hillary Clinton.

I don’t believe Donald is going to be the nominee. I don’t believe he’s going to be the President. As we get closer to the election people start looking at the candidates and they start looking at their records. Voters are tired of what I call, ‘campaign conservatives.’ Those are people who are conservative on the campaign trail but

haven’t walked the walk. Voters are looking for a consistent conservative, someone who’s the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. You know, in these republican primaries, every republican is saying they want to stand up and fight Washington. Well, if that’s the question, here’s your follow-up question: when have you ever stood up and fought Washington? When have you ever stood up and taken on, not just Democrats, but leaders in your own party. And, I’m the only one who has done that over and over again.

**Source:** For the complete transcript, see <http://wkrg.com/2015/12/21/only-on-5-interview-with-ted-uz/>

## DIASPORA WATCH

### US elections 2016: RO Khanna, a hope for Indian-American in Silicon Valley

The US Presidential elections are knocking on the door and in an attempt to capture the buzz, OneIndia reached out to Democrat RO Khanna. He said that the congressional primary for my election will take place on June 7. It’s a historic opportunity to be elected an Indian American proud of their heritage to the U.S. Congress from Silicon Valley. This is the most important seat in the country. I hope everyone will vote and participate. Answering to a question why Indians would be attracted to vote for the Democratic Party and your candidacy, RO Khanna states that his passion is education and prioritizing education is a value that many in the Indian American community share. I am pushing for college to be affordable and debt free, for more funding for our public schools, and for better technology in our classrooms.

**Source:** <http://www.oneindia.com/feature/us%20elections%202016:%20ro%20khanna,%20a%20hope%20for%20indian-american%20in%20silicon%20valley-1962367.html> 21 December 2015

## MEDIA REVIEW

### **Sanders Heads Into Clinton's Foreign Policy Turf: The Democratic Debate By the Numbers**

After months of branding himself as the anti-Wall Street candidate, Democratic presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders seems to be broadening his focus. A Bloomberg Politics analysis shows that, during the weekend debate with his rivals for the nomination, he spent far more time discussing foreign policy than he has in the past.

For Sanders, who has promised a "political revolution," the Democratic presidential candidates' third face-to-face encounter in New Hampshire, represented an evolution. In the previous debate with former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and former Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, which occurred 24 hours after the Paris attacks, Sanders offered just two sentences on terrorism in his opening statement. He then quickly pivoted to his more familiar broadsides against "millionaires and billionaires." On the debate night, Sanders spent a full third of his opening statement on national security.

That shift persisted throughout the debate, as Sanders focused less on Wall Street (nine mentions, down from 16 in the last debate) and more on the Islamic State (16 mentions, up from four).

**Source:** [Bloomberg](#), 21 December 2015

### **Lindsey Graham drops out of presidential race**

South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham bowed out of the presidential race after failing to attract any significant support, despite his memorable zingers and passionate commitment to pushing a hawkish foreign policy agenda. His announcement came on the same day as the deadline hit for him to remove his name from the South Carolina primary ballot, a date that had been closely watched amid speculation that Graham would want to avoid a potentially poor performance in his own state's contest. "I was hoping not to have to make this call, but I think the time has come for me to suspend my campaign," he said. Graham, a well-respected voice in the Senate who easily won re-election in 2014 despite several attempts to unseat him by primary challengers, has

nonetheless failed to gain traction in the presidential contest. The senator, who entered the race in part because he hoped to push foreign policy issues to the forefront on the debate stage, has repeatedly been relegated to undercard contests, where he has earned positive reviews but hardly any boost in poll numbers.

**Source:** [Politico](#), 21 December 2015

### **Ben Carson, 'sensitive' to national security critics, announces foreign policy team**

Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson announced a 16-members foreign policy team that "will help Dr. Carson chart a course for renewed American global leadership in the 21st century" — the campaign's latest attempt to silence critics who have questioned his grasp of national security issues in the wake of the Paris attacks and the shooting in San Bernardino, Calif.

"I'm honored that these distinguished individuals have agreed to join my campaign," Carson said in a statement. "They bring with them great breadth and depth of experience in international affairs. I look forward to relying on their good counsel to offer solutions to the grave national security challenges this country faces."

Among those advisers listed were George Birnbaum, the former chief of staff to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and retired general Bob Dees.

"I'm very sensitive to, you know, the narrative that Carson doesn't know anything about foreign policy," Carson told an audience of more than 1,000 supporters here in Atlanta during a speech at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre.

**Source:** [Washington Post](#), December 8, 2015

### **Jeb Bush can't win Iowa. But he wants to make sure Marco Rubio doesn't come close.**

Jeb Bush has virtually no chance of winning the Iowa caucuses — but his team wants to make sure Marco Rubio doesn't do too well there either. The Bush-allied Super PAC Right to Rise USA released a new negative ad attacking Rubio — and, according to the Des Moines Register's Jennifer Jacobs, the ad will air on Iowa television. The ad itself is a pretty

misleading attack on Rubio for missing a Senate briefing on terrorism to fundraise (Rubio actually attended a similar briefing days earlier, one that included classified information). What is interesting about the ad, though, is that Bush's team is airing this attack on Rubio in Iowa, a state Bush himself has basically already conceded, rather than just focusing on New Hampshire, a state Bush desperately hopes to win. But this move by Bush actually makes a lot of sense — because any good news for Rubio out of Iowa would be terrible for Jeb Bush.

**Source:** [Vox News](#), December 29, 2015

### **Hillary Clinton silent as Donald Trump escalates attacks, innuendo**

Donald Trump's attacks against Hillary Clinton are entering a new, more personal phase in an already raucous election season.

The firefight started last week after Trump said Clinton "got schlonged" by President Barack Obama in the 2008 primaries -- taking the Yiddish word for penis and making a verb out of it, which shocked even Yiddish scholars. The following day, Clinton unloaded on Trump in an interview with The Des Moines Register, saying that was "not the first time he's demonstrated a penchant for sexism." There was a cease fire of sorts over Christmas but Trump restarted the next day, turning Clinton's words back on her and attempting to pull Bill Clinton into the fight.

**Source:** [CNN](#), 30 December, 2015

### **Trey Gowdy Officially Endorses Marco Rubio**

South Carolina Rep. Trey Gowdy officially endorsed Marco Rubio, calling him the best candidate on national security and saying that the Florida senator is "effective" rather than "flashy." "I'm going to vote for Marco Rubio. National security and public safety are the most important issues to me. And there is nobody better on those two issues than Marco Rubio," Gowdy told the crowd at a town hall in Clinton, Iowa. The endorsement could give Rubio a boost in Gowdy's home state, the third state to hold a primary and one that many pundits see as a must-win for the Florida

senator as he makes a play for the White House. But it could also be a boon for Rubio in Iowa, where Gowdy is joining him for two days of campaigning this week, lending the Florida senator considerable conservative credibility. Iowa's GOP caucuses have traditionally been dominated by grassroots and social conservatives, and the two GOP candidates who commonly draw the most conservative support — Sen. Ted Cruz and Donald Trump — have led most polls of the race there.

**Source:** [NBC News](#), 30 December 2015

## **FURTHER READING**

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