



BIO-DATA

Navtej Sarna (b. Dec 2, 1957) is a former Indian diplomat as well as an author and columnist.

Ambassador Sarna's last diplomatic appointment was as India's Ambassador to the United States during 2016-18, when he guided India's engagement with the US during the first two years of the Trump Administration. Some of the significant developments in bilateral relations during his tenure were the successful visit of Prime Minister Modi to Washington DC, the first 2+2 Dialogue between the two countries, the deepening of the Major Defense Partner status for India, the initiation of the Terrorist Designation Dialogue, the signing of the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement and so on.

Prior to this appointment Sarna served as India's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom at the time of the Brexit referendum. From 2008 to 2012, Sarna was India's Ambassador to the State of Israel and contributed significantly to the maturing of this critical relationship. Earlier in his career, Sarna served in various bilateral and multilateral diplomatic capacities in the Soviet Union, Poland, Bhutan, Geneva, Iran and Washington DC.

Ambassador Sarna has also held several crucial positions at the Foreign Office in Delhi. He has the distinction of being the longest serving Spokesperson for India's Foreign Ministry from 2002 to 2008, during which time he worked with two Prime Ministers and three Foreign Ministers. This period saw the modernization of the Ministry's outreach effort through greater use of digital platforms.

Later he served as the Special Secretary in charge of International Organizations, anchoring India's Presidency of the UN Security Council, arms control and nuclear negotiations, negotiations for the Agenda 2030, elections to International bodies, Peacekeeping operations as well as India's entry as Observer to the Arctic Council. As Secretary (West) during 2014-2015 he was the top official responsible for India's relations with 95 countries. Ambassador Sarna led the Indian team for hosting the Third India Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi with the participation of 54 African nations.

Navtej Sarna is also an established author of fiction and non-fiction. His works include the novels *The Exile* and *We Weren't Lovers Like That*, the short story collection *Winter Evenings*, non-fiction works *The Book of Nanak*, *Second Thoughts* and *Indians at Herod's Gate*, as well as two translations, *Zafarnama* and *Savage Harvest*. He has been a regular contributor to several Indian newspapers and journals in India and abroad. He writes a monthly column on foreign policy related matters in *The Week* magazine.

Ambassador Sarna is an advisory board member of the Kautilya School of Public Policy and an independent member of the National Broadcasting Standards Authority. He also sits on the Governing Council of the Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University and holds several memberships including that of the India International Centre, India Habitat Centre and the Delhi Gymkhana Club. He is also the Patron of the Khushwant Singh Literary Festival in London.

Ambassador Sarna attended Delhi University, where he studied law and commerce. He is fluent in English, Hindi, Punjabi, and has working knowledge of Russian and Polish. He is married to Dr. Avina Sarna; they have two children Satyajit and Nooreen and both practice law in New Delhi.
