

Biden outlines 10-day blitz of executive actions to nullify Trump era

Washington: In his first hours as president, Joe Biden plans to take executive action to roll back some of the most controversial decisions of his predecessor and to address the raging coronavirus pandemic, his incoming chief of staff said on Saturday.

The opening salvo would herald a 10-day blitz of executive actions as Biden seeks to act swiftly to redirect the country in the wake of Donald Trump's presidency without waiting for Congress.

On Wednesday, following his inauguration, Biden will end Trump's restriction on immigration to the US from some Muslim-majority countries, move to rejoin the Paris climate accord, and mandate mask-wearing on federal property and during interstate travel. Those are among roughly a dozen actions Biden will take on his first day in the White House, his incoming chief of staff, Ron Klain, said in a memo to senior staff.

Other actions include extending the pause on student loan payments and actions meant to prevent evictions and foreclosures for those struggling during the pandemic.

"These executive actions will deliver relief to the millions of Americans that are struggling in the face of these crises," Klain said in the memo. "President-elect Biden will take action — not just to reverse the gravest damages of the Trump administration — but also to start moving our country forward."



President-elect Joe Biden has outlined his plans for immediate action following his inauguration in Washington.*CREDIT:AP*

“Full achievement” of Biden’s goals will require Congress to act, Klain wrote, including the \$1.9 trillion (\$2.47 trillion) virus relief bill he outlined on Thursday. Klain said that Biden would also propose a comprehensive immigration reform bill to lawmakers on his first day in office.

Providing a path to citizenship for millions of immigrants in the US illegally will be part of Biden’s agenda, according to people briefed on his plans. Ali Noorani, president of the National Immigration Forum and among those briefed, said immigrants would be put on an eight-year path. There would be a faster track for those in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which shields people from deportation who came to the US as children, and for those from strife-torn countries with temporary status.

On Thursday, the new president’s second day in office, Biden would sign orders related to the COVID-19 outbreak aimed at reopening schools and businesses and expanding virus testing, Klain said. The following day, Friday, will see action on

providing economic relief to those suffering the economic costs of the pandemic.

In the following week, Klain said, Biden would take additional actions relating to criminal justice reform, climate change, and immigration — including a directive to speed the reuniting of families separated at the US-Mexico border under Trump's policies.

More actions will be added, Klain said, once they clear legal review.

Incoming presidents traditionally move swiftly to sign an array of executive actions when they take office. Trump did the same, but he found many of his orders challenged and even rejected by courts.

Klain maintained that Biden should not suffer similar issues, saying “the legal theory behind them is well-founded and represents a restoration of an appropriate, constitutional role for the President.”

AP

Source:

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/north-america/biden-outlines-10-day-blitz-of-executive-actions-to-nullify-trump-era-20210117-p56uq7.html>

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