

*Jewels  
of  
Rajasthan*

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*In the World*



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JAIPUR - INDIA

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## *Dr. Renu Khator*

*Chancellor, University of Houston System  
President, University of Houston  
Houston (Texas)*

When Dr. Renu Khator's appointment as president of the University of Houston was announced in 2007, many people turned to Google to find out more about this curiously named person who would be leading the grand state of Texas's third largest public university. In India, televisions interrupted their programming to announce the news. Thousands of congratulatory e-mails flooded in, many from Asians and Asian Americans proclaiming it a great day as Khator became the first Indian immigrant to head a comprehensive public research university in the United States.

Dr. Renu Khator was born on June 29, 1955, in Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh. Her roots are from Osian, near Jodhpur. After being married to Dr. Suresh Khator (whose family hails from Bagar, near Jhunjhunu), she moved to the United States of America in 1974. They have two daughters, Pooja and Parul, both of whom are medical doctors. Pooja is married to Der in Parks and has a son, named Kai.

Today, Dr. Renu Khator is chancellor of the University of Houston System - a group of four individual state universities - and president of its flagship school, the University of Houston, the largest school in the system with 40,000 students and a top-ranked public research





*With India Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh*

institution. Overall, the four-university system serves 66,000 students, has an annual budget that exceeds \$1.3 billion, and generates a \$3.5 billion-plus impact on the Greater Houston area's economy each year.

When Dr. Khator was first appointed president of the University of Houston, she made a commitment to elevate the school to Tier One status - the top academic and research ranking in America - no matter how long such a formidable task might take.

To the surprise of many but the delight of all, it took just three years.

In January 2011, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching placed the University of Houston in the highest classification of research universities, joining an elite group of 100 or so institutions in that Tier One category. In addition, the University of Houston made significant progress in the Top American Research Universities (TARU) rankings and reached several qualitative benchmarks established by state of Texas legislature to gain special National Research University Fund (NRUF) support. The Princeton Review also named the University of Houston as one of the top colleges in the country for undergraduate education.

The University of Houston, founded in 1927, is Texas's third-largest university and a Tier One public research institution. With an enrollment of more than 40,000, the University of Houston now awards 7,000 degrees annually, including approximately 200 Ph.D.'s. Recognized for its diversity, the University of Houston has no racial majority on campus and its international student body represents more than 140 countries.

The University of Houston is part of the University of Houston System, the state's only metropolitan higher education system, which also includes the University of Houston-Downtown, a four-year undergraduate university with selected graduate programs; the University of Houston-Clear Lake, specializing in upper-level and graduate programs, including one Ph.D. program; and the University of Houston-Victoria, a four-year institution with master's degree programs. In addition, the



*With Former President, Mr. Bill Clinton  
(and husband Mr. Suresh Khator)*

University of Houston System consists of branch campuses in Pearland and Northwest Houston, teaching centers at Cinco Ranch and Sugar Land as well as KUHT-TV, the nation's first educational TV station, and two radio stations - KUHF-FM, Houston's NPR affiliate, and classical music station KUHA-FM.

On Nov. 7, 2008, the University of Houston celebrated Dr. Khator's investiture as its eighth chancellor and thirteenth president. The afternoon ceremony was the official conferral of the symbols of the president's office, and was graced with all the pageantry of traditional academic ceremonies. The "Inspiring Excellence" event was more than the inauguration of a president. It was a multi-day celebration, held in conjunction with the university's Homecoming festivities, with a wide range of events and activities on campus and around the city. In addition, Dr. Khator's investiture galvanized the support of the Indian community, not only in the United States but also in her home country.

Under President Khator's leadership, the University of Houston has experienced record-breaking research funding, enrollment and private donations. The University of Houston launched its 75-acre Energy Research Park, part of her \$400-million campus construction program, and became a member





*With India Industrialist Mr. Ratan Tata  
(and husband Mr. Suresh Khator)*



*At Podium*

of the nearby Texas Medical Center, the world's largest such facility.

The University of Houston's remarkable progress has put the school in the national spotlight and positioned President Khator as one of the emerging leaders in the higher education community. She has been asked to serve on the board of directors of the American Council on Education (ACE) and has contributed commentaries on academic issues to ACE's *The Presidency*, *U.S. News & World Report* and the Institute of International Education's *Networker Magazine*, among other publications. A noted scholar in the field of global environmental policy, she has published numerous books and articles on the subject. In addition, she is a published poet and short story writer in her native Hindi language.

Dr. Khator recently joined some of the world's most respected leaders when she was named to the Indian Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council. She serves on several boards, including the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, the American Council on Education, the Greater Houston Partnership, the Houston Technology Center, the Texas Medical Center CEO Group and the Business-Higher Education Forum Board of Directors.

She earned her B.A. (Liberal Arts) from Kanpur University, India B.A. in 1973. In the United States, she received an M.A. (Political Science) in 1975 and a Ph.D. (Political Science/Public Administration) in 1985, both from Purdue University.

Shortly after marriage in India, she traveled with her new husband Suresh to the United States for graduate studies despite having no real proficiency in English. Developing her English skills by watching television sitcoms like "I Love Lucy," she eventually received her graduate degrees, began teaching at the university level and eventually took on the challenging positions of administrative leadership.

When Dr. Khator is asked whether her demanding career required her to make personal sacrifices regarding her family, she is pleased that she can honestly say no - and realizes how blessed she has been in that regard. "I was fortunate in two respects," she





*With her Two Daughters*

says. "First, I had children at a very young age, and they were already in college by the time I took my first steps on the challenging road to administration. Second, my husband Suresh has been the dreamer and architect of my career. He does whatever is necessary to help me succeed, from fixing a last-minute dinner to graciously dressing up in a tux to company me to an event for the fourth time in one week. Whatever success I have enjoyed comes from Suresh's unending support and inspiration."

Prior to her UH appointment, Dr. Khator served as provost and senior vice president at the University of South Florida, enjoying a 22-year career at that institution. Notably, she played a pivotal role in securing the lead philanthropic gift to build the \$34.5 million Kiran C. Patel Center for Global Solutions, a research center that aims to improve living conditions in under-developed countries.

An international traveler, Dr. Khator's journeys include visits to South Africa, Tanzania, Japan, China, Thailand, Hong Kong, South Korea, Macau, Nepal, Brazil, Costa Rica, Argentina, Mexico, Uruguay, Paraguay, The Bahamas, Jamaica, The Netherlands, Germany, France, Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Russia, Canada, Wales and India.

She has been honored with the Outstanding American by Choice Award given by the Citizenship and Immigration Services to recognize the outstanding achievements of naturalized U.S. citizens. She is also the recipient of Hind Rattan (Jewel of India) award given to non-resident Indians who have made outstanding contributions in their field. Additionally, she has been honored with the Doctor of Social Sciences degree, *honoris causa*, from her alma mater, Purdue University.

Her vision for the University of Houston was shaped by more than 12,000 suggestions she solicited from the campus and the community during her first 100 days in office. Drawing on those suggestions and relying on the enthusiastic support of the university, the city of Houston and the state of Texas, Dr. Khator has led the way in transforming the University of Houston into a nationally-competitive research university recognized as one of the best in the United States.

*With her Two Daughters and Mr. Suresh*



*With UH Students*

Today, she responds to the complex challenges of leading a major university like the University of Houston by keeping a single, "no excuses" priority in mind: Student Success. "We can discuss different ways to achieve this, but everything we do must support that outcome - the success of our students. "And that," she declares, "is non-negotiable."

