

## **High Commission of India (Georgetown)**

### **India-Guyana Bilateral Brief**

Diplomatic relations between India and Guyana exist since 1965 when a Commission of India was established in Georgetown in May 1965 and was made a full-fledged High Commission of India in 1968 after the country got independence on May 26, 1966.

#### **Joint Commission:**

The fourth session of India-Guyana at the Ministerial level was held in Georgetown in May 2008. The fifth session of the Joint Commission was held at Georgetown on 22 April 2023 co-chaired by Dr. S. Jaishankar External Affairs Minister and Guyanese Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation Mr. Hugh Hilton Todd.

Eight Joint Working Groups have been constituted to strengthen cooperation in Agriculture, Health & Pharma, Infrastructure Development, Energy, Ayurveda & Wellness, Technology Innovation, Defence and Human Resources & Capacity Building.

#### **Foreign Office Consultations:**

The fourth round of FOC took place in Georgetown on 28 November 2022. The Indian side was led by Secretary (East) Shri Saurabh Kumar and the Guyanese side by Ambassador George Talbot Director, Multilateral Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

#### **Bilateral Visits:**

The last state visits have been that of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Guyana in November 2024, President Bharrat Jagdeo to India in August in 2003 and our Vice President Shri Bhairon Singh Sekhawat's visit to Guyana in 2006. Going further back - Prime Minister Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, O.E.(Order of Excellence of Guyana) (1971); President Arthur Chung (1975); President Dr. Cheddi Jagan (1993) visited India and Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi (1968) and Vice President Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma (1988) undertook official visits to Guyana.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid a historic visit to Guyana from 19-21 November 2024 which resulted in signing of ten bilateral agreements between India and Guyana including in the fields of hydrocarbons, health, pharmaceuticals, ICT, broadcasting, culture and agriculture. Hon'ble PM, along with PM of Grenada Dickon Mitchel also co-chaired 2<sup>nd</sup> India-CARICOM Summit which was attended by all members of CARICOM including 12 Heads of State/Governments. To further build on India's close development partnership and strong people to people ties with the region, Hon. PM offered assistance to CARICOM countries in seven key areas, i.e. capacity building, agriculture and food security, renewable energy and climate change, innovation, technology and trade, cricket and culture, ocean economy and maritime security, medicine and healthcare.

President Donald Ramotar visited India in January 2015. Then President David Granger attended the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance in March 2018 at New Delhi. In January 2018, Second Vice President and Foreign Minister Carl B. Greenidge, accompanied by Natural Resources Minister, Raphael Trotman, visited India. Minister within Ministry of Public Infrastructure Ms. Annette Ferguson visited India to attend the First General Assembly of the ISA and the 2nd Renewable Energy Global Investors' Meet & Expo (2nd RE-INVEST) in New Delhi in October 2018. Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Mr. Hugh Hilton Todd visited India from 26 April to 1 May 2022 to attend the Raisina Dialogue 2022. The President of Guyana Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali led a delegation to an official visit to India from 08-14 January 2023 as the Chief Guest for the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas. President Ali was conferred with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award at the Valedictory Session on 10 January 2023 in Indore. Vice President of Guyana Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo visited India from 20-25 February 2023 at the invitation of the Vice President of India. Agriculture Minister Zulfikar Mustapha visited India for the Global Year of Millets Conference in New Delhi from 18-22 March 2023.

From India, Dr. Satya Pal Singh, MoS for Human Resources Development, Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation visited Guyana from 8-11 May, 2018 as a part of Special Outreach programme.

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar, accompanied by an official and business delegation, paid an official visit to Guyana from 20-24 April 2023. EAM also participated in the first ever India-Guyana Business Roundtable and a Diaspora Event.

Minister of Health Dr. Frank Anthony along with National Security Advisor Captain Gerry Gouveia and CEO of Guyana Office for Investment Dr. Peter Ramsaroop and a large business delegation visited India for the 9th edition of the India-LAC Conclave held on 3-4 August 2023 in New Delhi.

Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat visited India for the Global South Energy Ministerial Roundtable on 7 February 2024 during the India Energy Week at Goa.

Prime Minister Brig (Ret'd) Mark Phillips visited India from 6-11 February 2024. Minister for Human Services & Social Security, Dr Vindhya Vasini Persaud visited India on her private visit to Delhi in August 2024. Hon'ble Collin Croal, Minister of Housing and Water also visited Delhi to attend India Water Week in Sept 2024.

## **UN & CARICOM**

Guyana generally coordinates its approach to international organizations with other members of CARICOM. CARICOM's position is both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership should be expanded and it should accommodate CARICOM's (Small States) interests and reflect Africa's position.

Guyana was elected as a Non-Permanent Member of the UN Security Council in June 2023 and assumed functions in January 2024.

Guyana also assumed Chair of CARICOM in January 2024 for six months term till June 2024.

## Trade and Investment

Total India-Guyana trade in 2021-22 amounted to US\$ 223.36 million with exports of US\$ 66.41 million and imports of US\$ 156.96 million, a tremendous increase from US\$ 46.97 million in 2020-21. During 2022-23, the trade dipped to US\$ 66.37, which, however, picked up in 2023-24 to US\$ 105.97 with exports of US\$ 99.36 million and imports of US\$ 6.61 million.

(In US\$ Millions)

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
India's <b>Exports</b>	66.41	62.15	99.36
India's <b>Imports</b>	156.96	4.22	6.61
<b>Total Trade</b>	<b>223.36</b>	<b>66.37</b>	<b>105.97</b>

## Energy

An MoU on Cooperation in New and Renewable Energy was signed with Guyana on January 31, 2018 during the visit of Second Vice President and Foreign Minister Carl B Greenidge. Guyana has signed and ratified the Framework Agreement on International Solar Alliance on January 30, 2018.

Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) purchased (first purchase) one million barrels of Liza crude oil from Government of Guyana's share of oil. Earlier a consortium of HPCL-Mittal Energy had purchased 1 million barrels in March 2021. A broad-based bilateral MoU for Cooperation in the Hydrocarbons sector has been signed during the visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister to Guyana in November 2024.

Guyana joined the Global Biofuel Alliance as initiating Found Member in July 2023. Guyana also applied for joining the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

Guyana joined Coalition of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) in 2024.

## Education

Nine scholarships are being offered to Guyanese Student under the Commonwealth Scholarship Plan and 4 under ICCR scholarship schemes for studying Indian culture.

Two Indian Universities - Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Jain "Deemed To Be" University, Bangalore - have been selected by the Ministry of Education of Guyana under the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) to provide thousands of online scholarships to Guyanese. In 2022, 4590 slots were allocated to IGNOU, Jain 'Deemed To Be" and Texila universities and Sherlock Institute of Forensic Sciences. University of Petroleum & Energy Studies has also been added as a partner University.

## **ITEC**

So far more than 900 Guyanese nationals have benefited from ITEC Programmes in various streams like IT, Telecom, Entrepreneurship, Administration, Renewable and Alternate Energy, Banking, Insurance, Finance including Accounts and Audit etc. 50 ITEC slots were allotted to Guyana in the year 2021-22 while 55 students joined slots of e-ITEC courses in 2021-22. In 2022-23, 75 slots have been allotted to Guyana. In 2023-24, 110 slots allotted and 132 utilized and in 2024-25 – 110 slots have been allotted again.

Allotment of 19 ITEC slots in 2021-22, 38 for the year 2022-23 and 46 for 2023-24 have opened opportunities for Guyana Defence Force to train under ITEC including for Army, for Air Force and for Navy.

## **Civil Aviation**

Annexure B of the Air Services Agreement was signed between India and Guyana on 22 April 2023.

## **Consular**

India and Guyana have an Agreement on Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic, Service and Official Passports.

## **COVID-19**

Under *Vaccine Maitri* initiative, India donated 80,000 doses of Covishield to Guyana on 7 March 2021. India also donated USD 1 million to Guyana in 2020 under India-UN Development Partnership Fund to upgrade its critical healthcare infrastructure to combat COVID19 which helped them to procure over 34 ventilators, thousands of protection equipment and emergency care medicines, etc. Besides, Government of India provided 30,000 Hydroxychloroquine tablets to the Government of Guyana in support of its fight against COVID-19. India also funded US\$ 500,000 to prevent teenage pregnancy in Guyana in coordination with the UNFPA.

## **Culture**

The Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre in Georgetown, established in 1972, is one of the oldest Indian Cultural Centres abroad, and teaches Indian classical dance, yoga and music. Majority of Indo-Guyanese population strictly follow religious practices brought with them during the time of indentureship. Though they have lost linguistic and family contacts with India, they play Indian music, watch Indian movies and soaps and wear Indian costumes during festive and religious occasions. India donated to Guyana a monument called “Indian Arrival Monument”, commemorating arrival of first group of indentured labourers in Guyana on 5 May 1838. Director General of Indian Council of Cultural Relations Shri Kumar Tuhin visited Guyana on 14-16 October 2023.

## **Indian Community**

The number of Indian nationals is about 1500 mainly restricted to members of the Mission, Indian Cultural Centre of the Mission, staff of Bank of Baroda and other international agencies, doctors, nurses, students of private medical institutions and workers employed by local companies, hospitals and University of Guyana.

## **Developmental Cooperation & Projects**

India had extended concessional line of credit through EXIM Bank for over US\$ 150 million including for Modernization of Sugar Plants, Construction of Cricket Stadium (grant of US\$ 6 million + LOC US\$ 19 million), Installation of Solar Traffic Lights (US\$ 2.1 million) and for purchase of pumps (US\$ 4 million). The other ongoing LoC projects are: (i) East Bank-East Coast Road Linkage Project under LoC of US\$50 million, (ii) Acquisition of Ocean Ferry Vessel under LoC+Grant of US\$ 7.07 and US\$ 5 million, (iii) Upgradation of Primary Health Centre at Bartica under LoC of US\$ 17.5 million, (iv) Solar Home Lighting System for 30,000 homes in the Hinterland Communities under LoC of US\$ 7.29 million, and (v) Supply of two Hindustan 228-201 aircraft from HAL under LOC of US\$ 23.37 million. LoC agreement was signed for Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant at Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Georgetown at a cost of US\$ 2.5 million.

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*06 February 2025*