



PRESS RELEASE

High Commissioner of India's visit to Antigua and Barbuda

High Commissioner of India, H.E. Dr. K.J. Srinivasa, who was visiting Antigua and Barbuda from 20 to 23 September 2021 met and interacted with the leadership of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. High Commissioner met Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister on 23rd September and discussed various matters of collaboration with India for the benefit and partnership for the people of Antigua and Barbuda. High Commissioner offered Indian partnership in IT, Healthcare, Agriculture, Agro & Food processing, Fisheries, Renewable Energy and training & deputation of experts and trainers through Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme Scholarships. Ambassador Colin Murdoch also participated in the meeting. High commissioner urged Antigua & Barbuda to join the International Solar Alliance. He mentioned that it is important for Antigua and Barbuda to sign and ratify the amended ISA Framework Agreement at the earliest as it would be beneficial to all member countries with its stated purpose of sharing new technologies in renewable energy and funds, etc. He also discussed about the announcements of assistance made by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi during his meeting with CARICOM leaders in September 2019, including US\$ 10 million Line of Credit (LoC) for solar energy and climate change related projects and sought proposals from the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

On 23rd September, High Commissioner Srinivasa also met Honourable E. P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Trade and discussed matters of bilateral interest and working closely at multilateral level in all fora including the UN and CARICOM. High Commissioner appreciated the Government of Antigua and Barbuda supporting India in UN and other international fora as in the past as a close and reliable partner. Antigua and Barbuda's continued support to India's position in international fora on many global issues.

High Commissioner met Honourable Sir Robin Yearwood KGCM, Minister of Public Utilities, Civil Aviation and Energy on 22nd September and discussed among other things about the decision of Antigua and Barbuda joining the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the USD 10 million Line of credit for solar energy projects. Mr Brian Challenger, Adviser, Antigua Civil Aviation Sustainable Energy also attended the meeting.

Meeting the Honourable Sir Molwyn Joseph KGCM, Minister of Health, Wellness and the Environment on 20th September, while discussing various matters related to healthcare management, etc., High Commissioner also offered to share the well regarded Co-WIN platform from the Government of India for the management of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Antigua and Barbuda. Minister Joseph conveyed

his gratitude to India for the 40,000 AstraZeneca vaccines donated in March 2021 through the High Commissioner and also for the USD 1 million aid for upgrading Health infrastructure to combat COVID19 in 2020 as well as the donation of USD 1.1 million for the reconstruction of the Hanna Thomas Hospital in Barbuda and the Barbuda Post office.

High Commissioner also called on Hon'ble Ms. Alincia Williams-Grant, President of the Senate and H.E. Sir Gerald Watt, QC, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Antigua and Barbuda and conveyed the invitation to them from Hon'ble Om Brila, Speaker of the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Indian Parliament) for the function to celebrate the Centenary Year of Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of India to be held in New Delhi on 4 & 5 December 2021. As India could contribute significantly to capacity building and skill development of many Caribbean countries by training a large number of Government officials under ITEC Programme, High Commissioner reiterated India's offer of training assistance in Parliamentary Practices and Procedures, Capacity Development in Election Management, Electoral Technology and Voter Registration, Legislative Procedures, etc. India also offered training programmes for Members of Parliament and Senior Officials of Parliament through Parliamentary Internship Programme for Parliament Officials and International Programme in Legislative Drafting under ITEC Scholarship programme.

High Commissioner also visited the University of West Indies (UWI) campus at Five Islands and met the senior management of the UWI. He offered to expand collaboration further by signing of MoUs with Indian Universities and educational institutions and facilitating Exchange Programmes between the two countries. He also emphasized the need for knowledge sharing and training in IT, nursing, pharmacy, maths, medicine and other higher education areas.

During his stay, High Commissioner visited various facilities and infrastructure which were set up with an assistance of US\$ 1 million extended by India to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for improving health infrastructure and capacities in Antigua and Barbuda for combating COVID-19 pandemic under 'Strengthening national Health capacities and reducing socio-economic and human development negative impacts of COVID19 crisis in Antigua and Barbuda'. This assistance of US\$ 1 million from India under India-UNDP Fund was used for improving health infrastructure in Antigua and Barbuda, for procurement of life-saving medical supplies and equipment like Ventilators, etc. Besides, the Government of India provided 10,000 Hydroxychloroquine tablets to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda as a gesture of goodwill in support of its fight against COVID-19. Under Vaccine Maitri, India gifted the first ever vaccine to Antigua and Barbuda, 40,000 doses of the Made in India Covid-19 vaccine - COVISHIELD, to on 1 March 2021 to meet the immediate requirements of vaccinating healthcare workers, frontline workers and those with co-morbidities.

High Commissioner went to Barbuda on 22nd September and visited Hannah Thomas Hospital and the Post Office in Barbuda which were rehabilitated with Indian direct cash assistance of US\$100,000/- and another US\$1 million through UNDP from

India-UN Development Partnership Fund for rehabilitation of Barbuda after the devastating hurricane in 2017. The refurbished/renovated hospital was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Antigua & Barbuda on 14 August, 2020.

High Commissioner also had extensive interaction with the Indian Community in Antigua and Barbuda. The Indian community has requested for a community center in Antigua and Barbuda. The High Commission of India has also requested the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for naming of a street in Antigua & Barbuda each after the great anti colonialism icon of non-violence Mahatma Gandhi.

Mr. Vijay ShivkumarTewani, Honorary Consul of India in Antigua and Barbuda accompanied the High Commissioner in the meetings. Mr. Tewani is a leading businessman of Indian origin in Antigua and Barbuda who aids and protects Indian merchants and other Indian citizens, who may trade with or visit or reside in Antigua and Barbuda.

23rd September 2021