

## **Bilateral Relations: India- Cayman Islands**

The Cayman Islands, a group of three islands (Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman) in the north-west Caribbean Sea, about 150 miles south of Cuba, 460 miles south of Miami, Florida, and 167 miles northwest of Jamaica (land area 264 sq. km., population 54,000, GDP US\$2.8 bn.) is an English-speaking UK Overseas Territory. Cayman Island is one of the world's largest financial centres and a well-known as tax haven. UK Government seems amenable to allow autonomy to the Cayman Islands on certain aspects of its external affairs – on relations with CARICOM, Caribbean regional organizations, and other UK/Netherlands/French Overseas Territories/Dependencies in the Caribbean region, subject to prior intimation/approval of the Governor/UK Government. The conduct of foreign relations is controlled by the British Foreign Office. It is an associate member of CARICOM and UNESCO, and a member of Caribbean Development Bank, Universal Postal Union, and Interpol. It is not a member of the United Nations or any other international organization.

Though the Cayman Islands has neither participated in various International fora nor articulated its position on climate change, it has serious stakes in the on-going international discussions, inter-alia, on account of rising sea levels, warming of the oceans, coastal erosion, degradation of the marine environment, declining of fish stocks and increased frequency and intensity of storms and hurricanes, which threaten not only the sustainable development and fragile infrastructure but also the very existence of small island developing countries.

### **Political**

As a UK Overseas Territory, the Cayman Islands has not articulated its position on reforms of the UNSC or our candidature for the non-permanent seat.

**General elections** were held in the **Cayman Islands** on 24 May 2017. They were the first **elections** held after **electoral** reforms approved in a 2012 referendum, which introduced single member constituencies. The People's Progressive Movement remained the largest party, winning seven of the 19 seats and remaining seats were largely won by Independents. The present government headed by the Premier Mr. Alden McLaughlin who retained his seat.

It has no resident diplomatic representations from other countries. High Commissioner of India to Jamaica is concurrently accredited to the Cayman Islands.

Bilateral relations between India and the Cayman Islands have been friendly. There have been no high level exchanges and no bilateral agreements. William McKeeva Bush, former Premier of the Cayman Islands, accompanied by Mark Scotland, Minister for Health, Environment, Youth, Sports & Culture; Canover Watson, Chairman of the Cayman Islands Health Services Authority accompanied by four officials visited Bangalore from 15-17 December 2009 at the invitation of the Chairman of the Narayana Hridayalaya, for inauguration of a 1400-bed Cancer Hospital set up by Narayana Hridayalaya Hospital.

Our offer of 2 slots every year under the ITEC/SCAAP is not being utilized.

As the external relations of the Cayman Islands are conducted by the British Foreign Office, our major thrust has been to explore opportunities for strengthening economic interaction, disseminate information on India as part of our outreach efforts, provide consular services to the Indian community and the local population, and to assist the Indian community in relief and rescue efforts in case of natural calamities, as the territory is prone to periodic hurricanes and storms.

Though Cayman Islands is a tax haven and an International financial centre and remains the domicile of choice for Hedge Funds, our interaction with her has been rather limited.

## **Trade**

A three member delegation, from the Ministry of Finance (Dept of Revenue) attended the meeting of the "Peer Review Group of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes" from 18-23 July 2010 in The Bahamas. On the margins of the meeting, India and the Cayman Islands initialled a draft agreement on "Tax Information Exchange Agreement". Subsequently, India and Cayman Islands signed the Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) on the 21 March 2011.

There was a proposal for Foreign Direct Investment by NCBG Holding Inc., incorporated in the Cayman Islands, owned by US Citizens, to acquire 26% of shares in a proposed joint venture company to be set up in India with Indian partners, who will hold 74% equity in the joint venture Company. The company is engaged in manufacturing of wiring sets used in Vehicles, Aircraft, Ship and other machinery for Defence industry.

An agreement was signed by Narayana Hrudayalaya Hospital, Bangalore, with the Government of the Cayman Islands to build a health city in the capital Grand Cayman, in a joint venture to build a multi super-specialty hospital of 2,000 beds by 2012 and a world class medical university in the Caymans to train doctors, nurses and paramedical students from America, Canada, South America and the Caribbean region. The hospital has been operational since 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014. As of now, more than 500 Indians including Doctors, nurses, administrative staff members are working in the hospital.

Our bilateral trade is insignificant. However, there has been significant amount of investment gone into India in the form of FDI and Participatory Note in Indian stock market. As per DIPP data, as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017, an amount of over US\$ 1 billion has been invested in India as FDI.

The High Commission hosted a round table conference in Sept 2017 mainly focussing on Investment mobilisation into India for which Make in India power point presentation was given. For the first, India's national day reception was also hosted by the Mission on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018 for which Cayman Premier was Chief Guest. Several Ministerial colleagues, Senior officials, business community and members of the Indian community attended the reception. In order to show case India's dominance in Pharmaceutical Industry in terms of quality and price, a Pharmaceutical Conference

was hosted by the High Commission on the side lines of Caribbean Pharmaceutical Conference held in the grand Cayman Islands in August 2018. This even was well attended by the main distributors, Pharmacy owners, senior government officials and regulators from Caribbean countries.

### **Culture and Indian Community**

As per official figures indicated by the Cayman government, there are about 1500 Indians are working in Cayman including 500 persons in Cayman Health City, representing over 2.5% of the total population of 60,000 and they are mainly on work permits and largely employed in the hotel, hospitality and the security related organizations. There are a handful of Indian doctors, chartered accountants, and other professionals.

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