

**High Commission of India
Georgetown**

Brief on Guyana

The Cooperative Republic of Guyana is located on the North-eastern shoulder of South American continent and bound by Suriname on the East, Venezuela on the West and Brazil on the South and South-west. It has an area of about 215,000 sq. kms. and a population of 750,000. Density of population is 3.3 per sq. km. There are four natural regions. First is the Low Coastal Plains along the Atlantic with about 400 kms coastline. The coastal plain is about six feet below the mean high tide level and is protected from tides by a sea wall along the length of the coast. Second is the while Sand belt, which is covered mainly by forests. Third is the Highland region of mountain ranges like the Pakaraimas and the Kaieteur plateau. The last is the interior Savannahs which are divided into South and North Savannahs by the Kanuku Mountain range.

Guyana got independence from the colonial British rule on May 26, 1966. Guyana has a Parliamentary form of Government. Legislative power is exercised by a uni-cameral National Assembly with 65 members elected by proportional representation every five years under universal adult suffrage. The election is held in two parts with the first part comprising 40 seats to the National Assembly on the basis of the whole region of Guyana and the second part comprises of election of 25 members from 10 geographical constituencies. The Executive power is held by the President who is directly elected through an election which also elects members of the National Assembly and holds office for its duration.

Bilateral relations:

India's relations with Guyana are warm and cordial with a high degree of understanding. The interaction is structured through periodic Joint Commissions, Foreign Office Consultations, Cultural Exchange Programme and ITEC. Though structured bilateral visits are not very frequent, there are meetings of leaders at international conferences, either in India or abroad.

Prime Minister met with President Bharrat Jagdeo during the CHOGM Summit in Trinidad and Tobago in November 2009 and Speaker of the Guyanese Parliament visited India in January 2009 to attend Commonwealth Speakers' Conference. President Jagdeo embarked on a private visit to India in January 2011 and after demitting office in February 2012 to attend Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) 2012. The 3rd round of Foreign Office Consultations was held in Georgetown on 15th July, 2011. Prime Minister of Guyana, Mr. Samuel Hinds visited India in October, 2012, to attend International Seminar on Energy Access and also had a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of India.

President of Guyana, Mr. Donald Ramotar, accompanied by the former President Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo visited India to participate in DSDS 2013 Summit organized by The Environment Research Institute (TERI) from 31st January – 1st February, 2013 during which President Mr. Donald Ramotar made a courtesy call on the Hon'ble President of India. President Donald Ramotar also had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 16th July, 2014 on the sidelines 6th BRICS-UNASUR Meeting at Fortaleza in Brazil. Both the leaders reviewed bilateral relations including enhancing of economic and commercial ties.

President Donald Ramotar paid an official visit to India from 7-12 January 2015 as the Chief Guest for Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-2015 held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat and was conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award during the event.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President David Granger met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York on 24th September 2015. The two leaders had a broad based discussion on the state of bilateral relations and the way forward to further strengthen the relationship.

Prime Minister Moses Nagamootoo paid two private visits to India in 2016, first on October 1-9 and the second on November 11-14, 2016, to participate in the World Tamils Economic Conference in Chennai and the International Conference of Chief Justices of the World, organized by City Montessori School, Lucknow respectively. During his visit, Prime Minister Nagamootoo met Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen (Retd.) V.K. Singh on October 6, 2016. Guyanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Carl Greenidge and MOS Mr. M.J. Akbar met in September 2016 on the sidelines of UNGA to discuss about bilateral relations.

The Actg. Chancellor of the Judiciary made a private visit to India to attend the 19th International Conferences of Chief Justices of the World in Lucknow from November 14-20, 2018. Earlier, in November 2017, Minister of Public Security, Khemraj Ramjattan, attended the same Conference.

President David Granger visited India in March 2018 to attend the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance and had bilateral meetings with PM, Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy and Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. Earlier, in January 2018, Guyanese Foreign Minister, Carl Greenidge, accompanied by Natural Resources Minister, Raphael Trotman, visited India and had bilateral meetings with External Affairs Minister, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, MoS for Power and New & Renewable Energy. Guyanese Minister, within the 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 and Expo (2nd RE-INVEST) in New Delhi from October 2-5, 2018.

Dr. Satya Pal Singh, MoS for Human Resources Development, Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, visited Guyana from May 8-11, 2018 as a part of Special Outreach Programme and met President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Natural Resources Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in Guyana.

Trade and Investment :

**Trade between India and Guyana as per the statistics released by
Ministry of Commerce, New Delhi:**

(In US\$ Millions)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
India's Exports to Guyana	24.41	21.87	20.07	26.03	29.66

India's Imports from Guyana	10.3	18.48	14.48	6.59	6.42
Total Trade	34.71	40.35	34.55	32.62	36.08
Trade Balance	(+)14.11	(+)3.39	(+) 5.59	(+)19.44	(+)23.24

There is a small Indian community of Indians approximately 300 working as doctors, nurses, lab technicians, small business, skilled workers and laborers in big companies in Guyana. The number of Indians is likely to increase with the participation of Indian companies in the field of Agriculture and other business ventures.

India's contribution:

India executed some high-visibility projects under Line of Credit in Guyana, i.e. cricket stadium, traffic lights in Georgetown and supply of 14 irrigation drainage pumps. India has also set up a Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) in Guyana in April 2019 under its Grant assistance programme. An LoC of US\$50 million was extended in March 2016 for construction of East Bank-East Coast Road linkage project and is under execution. M/s RITES Limited was engaged in early 2018 as Project Management Consultant (PMC) for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR).

India offered a Grant of US\$ 8 million and LoC of US\$10 million in June 2016 for procuring an Ocean Ferry from India for use in the North Western and South Western regions of Guyana. The vessel could carry approximately 300 passengers and crew members and 14 sedans or 8 sedans plus 2 trucks. The bidding process for finalizing the supplier is in the final stages. An LoC of US\$4 million was extended in February 2017 for procurement and installation of high capacity mobile irrigation pumps for agricultural purposes and mitigation of flooding in Georgetown and its environs. The contract has been awarded to M/s Apollo International Limited, Gurgaon on 6 August 2018 for supply of 9 fixed and 3 mobile drainage pumps over a period of 12 months. The supplier is expected to procure and supply the pumps soon. Government of India extended an LoC for US\$ 17.5 million in July 2017 for up-gradation of three Regional Hospitals at West Demerara, Suddie and Bartica in Guyana. The tendering process is progressing. Proposal for supply of a pilot scale project Rice Husk Gasifier by the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy is also under process.

India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme:

India offered 24 slots during 2019-20 for Guyanese scholars to be trained in India under the ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme). So far, more than 500 Guyanese nationals have benefitted from ITEC Programme. In 2013, a Forestry team visited India on a study tour. One ITEC Expert on deputation with Rice Board of Guyana completed sharing know-how for four years.

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Visa matters:

India and Guyana have an Agreement on Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports. Guyana was included in the list of countries whose nationals are eligible for tourist visa on arrival in India w.e.f. January 25, 2015.

Community :

Indo-Guyanese constitute 39.8% of the country's population, a majority of whom 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.

Culture :

Swami Vivekanand Cultural Centre (formerly known as the Indian Cultural Centre) in Georgetown, the arm of ICCR in Guyana, was established in 1972. The Cultural Centre has provisions to teach Indian classical dance, yoga, Hindi and Sanskrit languages and music. Besides organizing classes for dance, yoga and music, the Cultural Centre also organizes cultural events round the year and takes part in cultural events organized by local cultural and social organisations. Phagwa (Holi) is one of the major festivals of Guyana. The Centre organizes Phagwa celebrations in a big way every year where the President of Guyana, the Leader of the Opposition, Prime Minister, former Presidents and Prime Ministers, senior Cabinet Ministers, former and current Members of Parliament, prominent Guyanese and children actively participate. The Centre organizes workshops from time to time and also participates in local cultural events as a part of its outreach programme. Hindi classes in Region 2 of Guyana are being held since 2010 under the aegis of ICCR.

Indian High Commission actively participated in celebration of 175th Anniversary of Indian Arrival in Guyana. GOPIO International inaugurated Calcutta monument in Georgetown and at Highbury in Region 6 – the point of first Indian arrival in Guyana. India has donated to Guyana a monument consisting of six bronze statues commemorating arrival of first group of indentured labourers in Guyana on May 5, 1838. The monument called “Indian Arrival Monument” was jointly inaugurated by President David Granger and the Director General of ICCR, Shri Akhilesh Mishra on May 5, 2019.

A 6-member Bhojpuri Music troupe visited Guyana from 23rd to 26th May, 2014 under the aegis of ICCR. The Troupe gave 3 performances including one on the Independence Day of Guyana. A 5-member music troupe led by renowned Sufi singer Indira Naik visited Guyana from 27-29 October 2014 under ICCR's sponsorship and gave two performances. A nine member cultural troupe led by Shri Jitendra Parashar visited Guyana from June 3-8, 2015 under ICCR's sponsorship and gave performances in Georgetown and Berbice. A Bhojpuri Cultural troupe fully sponsored by the ICCR performed at Georgetown and Mahaica in celebration of 50th Anniversary of Independence of Guyana.

The High Commission of India regularly organises a Sari draping and exhibition event for the last few years in a bid to popularise this quintessential Indian popular garment. International Day of Yoga is celebrated every year in Georgetown, Guyana. The Yoga events are received with great enthusiasm and fervor by the local population.

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