

India-Guatemala Bilateral Relations

Political:

India and Guatemala enjoy cordial and friendly relations. The diplomatic relations were established in the late 1970s. The visit of Shri Anand Sharma, the Minister of State for External Affairs, in June 2007, was the first-ever ministerial visit from India to Guatemala. After this visit, both countries decided to open their Embassies in respective countries. The Embassy of India in Guatemala was opened in December 2009 and became fully functional in mid-2010. Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Guatemala from April 29 to May 1, 2011. He formally inaugurated the Embassy on April 29, 2011 in the presence of H.E. Mr. Alvaro Colom Caballeros, the then President of Guatemala and other invited dignitaries and guests.

Guatemala opened its Embassy in New Delhi in April 2013. Ambassador Carlos Raúl Morales Moscoso, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala visited New Delhi and formally inaugurated the Embassy of Guatemala in New Delhi in October, 2014.

Bilateral agreements:

- Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation, signed in 1981.
- Cooperation Agreement for Cardamom Export, signed in 1983.
- Agreement for visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders signed in May, 2015.
- MoU between the Foreign Service Institute, MEA, India and the Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Guatemala, signed in May 2018.

Bilateral Visits from India:

2007 (June): Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs

2011 (May): Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs

2014 (April): Secretary (West) and Joint Secretary (LAC) for the first Foreign Office Consultations

2015 (May): Shri V. K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs to participate in the India-SICA Foreign Ministers meeting.

2018 (May): Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Hon'ble Vice President of India, accompanied by Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, Shri Jaswantsinh Bhabhor and four Members of Parliament.

Bilateral Visits from Guatemala:

2005 (May): Mr. Jorge Britz, Minister of Foreign Affairs

2007 (Aug.): Mr. Gert Rosenthal, Minister of Foreign Affairs

2008 (June): Mr. Haroldo Rodas Melgar, Minister of Foreign Affairs to attend the India-SICA meeting.

2014 (Oct.): Mr. Carlos Raúl Morales, Minister of Foreign Affairs, accompanied by Mr. Rodrigo Vielmann, Vice Foreign Minister, Mr. Sergio De La Torre, Minister of Economy and seven Guatemalan Businessmen to attend the VI India-LAC Investment Conclave.

2015 (Oct.): Vice Foreign Minister Rodrigo Vielmann to participate in the India-LAC Conclave.

2017 (Nov.): Vice Minister of Technology, Information and Communication, Gabriel Juarez Lucas to attend a Cyber Security Congress.

2017 (Dec.): Vice Minister for Natural Resources and Climate Change, Carlos Fernando Coronado Castillo to attend a meeting on environmental issues.

2018 (Mar.): Vice Minister of Economy for Integration of Foreign Trade, Dr. Julio Dougherty in connection with WTO meeting.

**Trade and Economic:
Indo-Guatemala Trade (in million US \$)**

Year (April - March)	Imports from Guatemala	Exports to Guatemala	Total trade	% Growth
2010-2011	40.18	112.68	152.86	64.57
2011-2012	06.71	191.29	198.00	29.52
2012-2013	08.31	224.61	232.92	17.64
2013-2014	13.12	212.36	225.48	-3.19
2014-2015	17.12	229.01	246.13	09.16
2015-2016	12.52	255.96	268.48	09.08
2016-2017	21.70	242.88	264.58	-1.45
2017-18	15.97	291.93	307.90	17.10
2018 (Apr.-Oct.)	9.56	171.66	181.22	--

Major items of export: Three wheelers and parts, Two wheeler Vehicles and accessories, Pharmaceutical products, Articles of Iron & Steel, cotton, Machinery & Mechanical Appliances and Parts thereof, Organic chemicals, Rubber & articles thereof, Electrical Machinery and equipment and parts thereof, miscellaneous edible preparations, etc.

Major items of import: Wood & articles thereof, wood charcoal, Sugar and Sugar confectionery, Coffee, Cardamom and Aluminium & articles thereof.

Trade delegations from India:

- 2005 (October): India participated in the INTERFER Trade Exhibition
- 2007 (March): Plastics Export Promotion Council (PLEXCONCIL) delegation
- 2010 (February): Coffee Board delegation to attend World Coffee Conference.
- 2010 (November): Spices Board of India delegation to visit Cardamom plantations
- 2011 (March): EEPC delegation
- 2012 (March): PLEXCONCIL delegation
- 2012 (August): TEXPROCIL delegation
- 2012 (September): PHARMEXCIL delegation
- 2013 (October): EEPC delegation
- 2014 (February): CHEMEXCIL delegation
- 2014 (March): TEXPROCIL delegation
- 2014 (April): PLEXCONCIL delegation
- 2014 (August): PHARMEXCIL delegation
- 2015 (May): TEXPROCIL delegation
- 2018 (September): PHARMEXCIL delegation

Commercial Engagements: There are around 15 Indian companies being represented in Guatemala from pharmaceuticals, two-wheelers, three-wheelers, automobiles and IT sectors. Praj Industries is supplying equipment for ethanol production plants in Guatemala. B Fouress (P) Limited a well-known Indian company in hydro-electric field has operations in Guatemala. IGSEC Heavy Engineering Ltd. is engaged in supply of infrastructure, boilers, etc. for the sugar mills in the region. Hero motorcycles, Mahindra vehicles, Bajaj 2 and 3 wheelers are popular in Guatemala. Pharmaceutical companies including CIPLA, Himalaya Drugs, Caplin Point, Seven Pharma, Aurobindo, MSN Labs. are marketing their products in Guatemala through local agents or representative offices. Caplin Point has set up its own pharma distribution network in Guatemala, namely, Neo Ethicals. One plastic furniture manufacturing unit with Indian partnership is being set up in Guatemala. Textiles (Raymond) and soap products (Nirma. Medimix) are also present in Guatemalan market. Two importers from Guatemala took part in IPHEX 2017 on the invitation from Pharmexcil. Three businessmen from Guatemala attended the IndiaSoft 2017 and one took part in the CAPINDIA 2017. A Guatemala-

India Chamber of Commerce and Industry was set up in 2004 but is not fully functional.

An interactive meeting with Indian and Guatemalan businessmen dealing in Indian products and representing Indian companies was held on March 29, 2016 to exchange ideas on promoting Indian products and increasing the visibility of Brand India in Guatemala, El Salvador & Honduras.

The first Virtual Business Exploratory Summit between entrepreneurs from Guatemala City and Indian companies based in Mumbai was conducted over Skype on 27th April, 2016 in which major brands including Aptech, Sandu, Vithal Kamats, Raymond, Jetking, Shahnaz Husain, etc. participated.

The second “Make In India” event was held in Guatemala, jointly with the Chamber of Industry of Guatemala, and in association with the Chamber of Commerce, Banco Credito Hipotecario Nacional (CHN) and the apex export promotion body, AGEXPORT on 8th September, 2016. Two representatives from EXIM Bank India (Washington D.C. / New Delhi) took part in the event. Around 90 invitees from various government and business entities attended the event.

The Embassy organized a Virtual IT Business Summit at the San Carlos University on April 24, 2017 in association with the University of San Carlos, Guatemala and Stratech, Mumbai. Seven major IT and other business franchises from India as well as over fifteen Guatemalan companies took part in the Summit and deliberated on opportunities to promote business cooperation.

A trade promotion event was organized by the Chamber of Commerce, in association with the Embassy, on ‘Doing Business with India’, on 22nd November, 2017 at Hotel Barceló, Guatemala. Around 150 Guatemalan businessmen from different sectors participated in the event.

A 4-member delegation from WAPCOS led by CMD R.K. Gupta visited Guatemala during 18-21 January, 2018 and held meetings on 19-20 January, with the Vice Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, Jose Felipe Orellana Mejia; Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jairo D. Estrada; President of the Banco Credito Hipotecario Nacional (CHN Bank), Luiz Velasquez; Minister of Economy, Mr. Acisclo Valladares Urruela; Vice Minister of Economic Rural Development, M.V. Felipe Orellana and with the officials from the Chamber of Construction.

ITEC: Guatemala is an ITEC partner country since 1997- 98. The Government of India has offered 35 ITEC slots to Guatemala for 2018-19.

IT Center: Government of India, in an effort to contribute to capacity building in Guatemala, set up an IT Training Center in San Carlos University in August 2006. Tata Communications Services (TCS) ran this IT Center till July 2008, training about 1,500 Guatemalans, before it was handed over to the Guatemalans.

Donations: India donated US\$50,000 worth of medicines following Hurricane Stan in October 2005, 36 Bajaj three-wheelers in October 2005, and responding to Guatemala Government's food insecurity declaration, provided assistance of US\$250,000 in November 2009, US\$ 100,000 for Disaster Relief in the aftermath of the earthquake that struck Guatemala in November 2012, US \$ 200,000 for Drought relief in December 2014, and installed some solar powered traffic signaling system in May 2015.

Responding to the call made by the Guatemalan government to the international community, India extended US\$ 100,000 as cash donation in July 2018 towards disaster relief assistance for damages caused due to eruption of volcano Fuego.

Cultural Exchanges: Cultural exchanges are increasing year by year. A 15-member Odissi dance troupe visited Guatemala for a performance "Shyama" on 18th October, 2011. The Embassy organized a tourism road-show in Guatemala in association with India Tourism Office in New York in December 2015. Academic and other linkages are being encouraged and visits by Indian academicians have been well received. Holi, Diwali and other festivals are celebrated at the Embassy in which local Indians, Guatemalans and other friends of India actively participate. Bollywood films and dance is also getting popular in the country.

International Day of Yoga: There are numerous yoga schools in Guatemala with considerable followers. The Fourth International Day of Yoga was celebrated on 17th June, in Guatemala at the emblematic location of Plaza Obelisco, in association with the Municipality of Guatemala City and the Mayor's office. The event got wide publicity and was attended by around 300 persons. Indian spiritual organizations like Hare Krishna, Brahma Kumaris, Satya Sai Baba and Chinmaya Mission have followers in Guatemala.

Cultural/Other Events: Embassy participated in the Third "Paseo de la Sexta" Cultural Festival on 20 May 2017. The event, which was open to general public and held for two weeks, was organized by the Municipality of Guatemala City at Plaza de la Constitución.

A Chai festival was organized at one of the prominent shopping malls in Guatemala City Center by one of the Indian tea importers from El Salvador, on 20th May, 2017. The event received a good turn-out of over 100 people. A variety of India tea flavours was introduced to the visitors.

The Embassy of India organized a Tea Tasting Festival at Hotel Clarion Suites on 27 December 2018. Over 140 Guatemalan traders, businessmen, who have linkages with India and friends of India attended the event.

The Embassy organized a get-together of 30 Indian and Guatemalan businessmen dealing with Indian products and services, on 24th May, 2017 at the Chancery. The occasion was used to exchange views and share experiences of business practices as well as to discuss future course of events.

Embassy took part in the World Food Festival organized by the Diplomatic Corps of Guatemala on 30th May, 2017 at Hotel Intercontinental. Indian food and snack items were served. Over 800 people attended the event.

Guatemala Visa: With effect from June 6, 2011 for Indian nationals who are holders of ordinary passports, visa will not be required to enter Guatemala if they have valid visas of United States of America, Canada or Schengen, if they fulfil other conditions, as put up by immigration from time to time. All Indian nationals not having these visas will be required to obtain prior visa to enter Guatemala. The Guatemalan Embassy in New Delhi is fully functional, and issue visas to Indians.

Air Links/Travel: There are no direct flights between Guatemala and India. Convenient connections are available via United States, Mexico and Europe.

Indian community:

The Indian community in Guatemala is small and consist of about 100 individuals in all, working in the Indian Call Centers like '24/7 Customer-Guatemala' and 'Genpact', in cardamom export trade, in auto parts business, or in cottage industries. Most of them came to Guatemala during the last two decades.

Besides, there are around 500 people of India origin who came to this region as indentured laborers during the 19th and early 20th centuries and settled in the coastal Guatemala on Atlantic and a small township of Livingstone. They live in villages, own land, and are involved in fishing, agriculture and tourism sectors. They are mostly 4th-5th generation Indians, and by now well integrated into the local community. The Embassy of India constantly engages the Indian community in Livingstone and invites them for National Day events and cultural programmes.

Useful Resources:

For more information and latest updates, please visit Embassy of India in Guatemala website: <http://www.indemguatemala.gov.in>

Embassy of India, Guatemala Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/EmbajadaIndiaGuatemala>

Embassy of India, Guatemala Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/IndianEmbassyGT>
