

## **India-Dominican Republic Bilateral Brief**

Bilateral relations between India and the Dominican Republic (DR) have been friendly and continue to deepen in all spheres.

### **Political Relations and Institutional Framework**

2. **Diplomatic relations** between India and Dominican Republic were established on **4 May, 1999** with signing of a MoU and complete the milestone of 25 years in 2024. Dominican Republic opened its **Embassy in New Delhi** on **1<sup>st</sup> May 2006**. India opened its resident **Embassy in Santo Domingo** on **1<sup>st</sup> January 2022**.

### **Bilateral Visits from India**

3. **MOS (PM) Shri Pabitra Margherita** paid official visit to DR from **15 to 17 August 2024** to participate in the swearing in ceremony of President Abinader on his re-election as President of DR. He also called on FM Álvarez and discussed issues of bilateral interests. MOS paid floral tributes to the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Mahatma Gandhi Plaza and also interacted with members of the Indian diaspora at the Embassy premises.

4. **EAM Dr. S Jaishankar** paid an official visit to Dominican Republic from **27-29 April 2023**. He called on President Luis Abinader, held bilateral meeting with FM Roberto Álvarez, addressed a business event, delivered a talk on India's Foreign Policy and jointly inaugurated the Embassy with FM Álvarez in presence of Vice President Raquel Peña, President of Senate Eduardo Estrella, Minister of Defence Carlos Díaz Morfa and Minister of Higher Education Franklin García Fermín. EAM also unveiled a Mahatma Gandhi statue at a square in Gazcue which was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi Plaza and inaugurated India Pavilion at Faro a Colón museum. This was the highest level of visit from India to DR.

5. The **second round of Foreign Office Consultations** between India and Dominican Republic were held in Santo Domingo on **01 July 2022**. The Indian side was led by Shri Saurabh Kumar, Secretary (East) and the Dominican Republic by Ambassador José Julio Gómez, Vice Minister – Bilateral Relations of Foreign Affairs. The consultations reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations including political, trade and investment, capacity building and cooperation in science and technology including space, cyber security and artificial intelligence, higher education and cultural relations. Multilateral and regional issues including cooperation in UN, International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) were also discussed.

6. **MOS (MEA), Shri V. Muraleedharan** visited Santo Domingo from **25-27 August 2019**. During the visit, he called on Foreign Minister Miguel Vargas Maldonado and held discussions with Minister of Energy Antonio Isa Conde, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development Juan A. Jimenez Nunez and Minister of Industry Nelson Toca Simo.
7. **General (Rtd.) Shri V.K. Singh, MOS (MEA)** visited DR in **February, 2015**.
8. Secretary (West) M. Ganapati along with Joint Secretary (LAC) visited Dominican Republic on **22-23 August, 2012** for the **first Foreign Office Consultations** between the two countries. The visit highlighted the keen interest of both sides to promote trade, increasing scholarships for Dominican nationals as well as cooperation in natural disaster management and economic areas.
9. **MOS (MEA), Dr. Shashi Tharoor** visited Dominican Republic from **23-25 January, 2010**.
10. **MOS Shri Anand Sharma, MEA** visited DR in **February 2007**.
11. **MOS Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, MEA** visited Dominican Republic in **September 2004**. During the visit, the DR government announced its intention to upgrade diplomatic relations and open an Embassy in New Delhi.

#### **Bilateral Visits from Dominican Republic**

12. The **Vice President of Dominican Republic, Raquel Peña** paid an official visit to India from **3-5 October 2023**. Vice President Peña called on the Hon'ble Rashtrapatiji and held meetings with Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha and EAM. She had wide-ranging discussions with Hon'ble Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankar and reviewed bilateral relations covering political, defence, economic, cultural, education and developmental cooperation. They also discussed cooperation in multilateral fora and international issues of mutual interest. Vice President Peña delivered the 45th Sapru House Lecture on "The Dominican Republic and India: Natural Partners" at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and also visited IIT Delhi.
13. The then **President of the Dominican Republic Dr. Leonel Fernandez Reyna** visited India and attended the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit held from **3-5 February, 2011**. During his stay in India, besides meeting with Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister, he met with Indian business leaders and attended seminars at Mumbai, Bangalore and Delhi by FICCI, CII etc. He also addressed the Indian Council of World Affairs. A high level business delegation accompanied him.
14. In **June 2008**, DR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Clara Quinones de Longo

attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> India-Central America System for Integration (SICA) Foreign Ministers' meeting in New Delhi. Setting up of an IT Centre in Dominican Republic was announced at the meeting as a symbol of South - South Cooperation.

15. **DR Foreign Minister Carlos Morales Troncoso** visited India in **February 2006** heading a high level delegation which included Ministers of IT and Investment, Higher Education and Science and Technology, Deputy Tourism Minister and 12-member business delegates. The delegation visited Delhi, Agra, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

### **Others / Virtual**

16. Energy Minister & Mines Antonio Almonte Reynoso participated in the Energy Ministers' session of the virtual '**Voice of Global South Summit 2.0**' organized by the Government of India on 17 November 2023.

17. On 13 January 2023, FM Roberto Álvarez participated in the Foreign Ministers' session of the virtual '**Voice of Global South Summit**' organized by the Government of India as part of various events organized under India's G20 presidency.

### **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**

18. DR is a Member of International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Council for Climate Change is the focal point in ISA. However, DR yet to ratify the Agreement to become full fledged member of ISA. DR hosted the Sixth Meeting of the ISA Regional Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean from 9-11 September 2024 in Santo Domingo.

### **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)**

19. DR is a Member of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). DR is a representative in the Executive Committee of Small Island Developing States, for the period 2022-2024. After becoming a member of the coalition, Dominican Republic, for the first time participated in the Third Meeting of CDRI Governing Council held in New Delhi on 23 March 2022, represented by Mr. Max Puig, Executive Vice President of the Council for Climate Change DR's focal point.

20. Mr. Amit Prothi, Director General of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) led a delegation to participate in the Latin America & Caribbean Climate Week of the UN Climate held in Santo Domingo from 18 to 22 July 2022. The delegation held meetings with senior government officials of DR and also conducted regional Consultations with Caribbean countries on 20 & 21 July during and on the sidelines of the Climate Week.

21. Mr. Alan Ramirez, Technical Director, National Council on Climate Change and Clean Development Mechanism (NCCCDM) and Ms. Alejandrina Sosa, Consultant for Strategic Communication of Dominican Port Authority (APORDOM) attended the International Conference on Disaster Resilience Infrastructure ICDRI 2023 in New Delhi on 4-5 April, 2023.

22. Three officials from National Geological Service of DR were awarded CDRI Fellowship for the year 2023-24 (US\$ 15000 – 12 months) for study on Seismic Hazard, Floods and Physical Vulnerability of Buildings in the coastal area/south municipality of Barahona.

23. CDRI, on 31 October 2023, awarded two projects to Dominican Republic under the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) First Call for Proposals for Small Island Developing States (SIDS): (i) Strengthening Capacities, Security and Resilience of Critical Infrastructure in Dominican Republic, Cuba and Haiti, (ii) Improvement in Dominican Republic National Multi-Threat Early Warning System.

### **MoUs and Agreements**

24. Following is the list of MoUs and Agreements **already signed** between the two countries:

i. MoU for **establishment of diplomatic relations** between the two countries. Signed on 4 May 1999.

ii. MoU for the realization of regular **political consultations**. Signed on **31 May 2001**.

iii. **Bilateral Cooperation Agreement**. Signed on **17 February 2006**.

iv. MoU for setting up of **IT Center of Excellence** in DR. Signed on **23 January 2010**.

v. **Cultural Cooperation Agreement**. Signed on **23 August 2012**.

vi. MoU on Cooperation in **New and Renewable Energy Technologies**. Signed on **17 February 2015**.

vii. Agreement on **gainful employment** of the family members of diplomatic staff. Signed on **17 February 2016**.

viii. MoU on Cooperation between the **diplomatic institutes** of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Dominican Republic and India. **Signed on 3 October 2017**.

ix. Agreement on the **exemption of visa requirement** for holders of diplomatic and official passports. Signed on **26 August 2019**.

x. Cooperation Agreement between **CII** and **CONEP** signed on **28 April 2023**.

xi. MoU between **Invest India** and **ProDominicana** to strengthen links and extend support to business delegations, exchange of information and best practices and to explore investment opportunities. Signed on **02 August 2023**.

xii. Cooperation agreement in the field of medical products regulation between **CDSCO** and **DIGIMED**, drug regulatory agencies signed on **4 October 2023**.

xiii. MoU on cooperation in the field of **Marine Sciences** between National Institute of

Oceanography (NIO) and DR insitute ANAMAR signed on **4 October 2023**.

xiv. MoU between IIT-Delhi and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Techonology of DR for participation of DR students on scholarships to post-graduate & doctorate courses signed on **4 October 2023**.

xv. Protocol on Joint Economic and Trade Cooperation (JETCO) signed on **12 March 2024**.

xvi. MOU between Indian Meterological Department (IMD) and the National Meteorological Office of Dominican Republic (ONAMET) signed on **25 April 2024**.

### **Trade and Economic Cooperation**

25. Bilateral trade between India and the Dominican Republic has increased significantly in last few years, with balance of trade in favor of Dominican Republic. Two way trade increased to **US\$ 959 million** in the financial year **2021-22** (growth of 106%). Indian exports registered 48% growth to reach US\$ 310 million. Dominican exports increased by 152% to reach US\$ 649 million. Main items of India's exports in 2022-23 were Pharmaceuticals, Automobiles, Marine products, Cotton Yarn & fabrics, Plastic & Linoleum, Iron & Steel, Tobacco, Dying extracts and Boilers. Gold accounts for 92% of DR exports to India. Other important items of DR exports to India include Iron & Steel, Pulp of Wood, Aluminium and Cocoa. Following is the evolution of bilateral trade in the last seven years.

*(all figures in US \$ million)*

	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24 (till Nov'23)</b>
India's Export	196.92	215.81	213.32	209.06	310.08	329.63	347
India's Import	645.81	566.57	361.11	256.94	648.77	360.31	570.47
<b>Total Trade</b>	<b>842.73</b>	<b>782.38</b>	<b>574.43</b>	<b>466.00</b>	<b>958.85</b>	<b>689.94</b>	<b>917.47</b>

*Source: Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce*

26. On 15 November 2022, the Embassy organized a seminar on '**Indian Pharmaceuticals Industry - What it can offer to Dominican Republic**' at the premises of the Chamber of Commerce of Santo Domingo. Amongst the speakers were Vice Minister of Public Health & Director General of DIGEMAPS (the drug regulatory authority of DR) Mr. Leandro Villanueva and Director General of Promesecal, the public medicine procurement agency of DR, Mr. Adolfo Perez. Mr. Udaya Bhaskar, Director General, Pharmexcil addressed the gathering virtually from India. Representatives of leading Indian pharmaceutical companies doing business in DR viz. Seven Pharma, MSN Labs and Glenmark Pharmaceuticals made their presentations. The event was well attended by pharmaceutical industry importers, distributors and manufacturers.

27. On 14 December 2022, Embassy of India in association with GUIA-RD (United Group of the Automotive Industry), ACOFAVE (Vehicle Manufacturers Dealers Association) and

ANAMARA (Association of Auto Spare parts dealer) of Dominican Republic and Auto-components Manufacturers Association (ACMA), India organized a conference on “**Indian Automobile Industry and Ways to Increase Collaboration with Dominican Republic**”. Mr. Hugo Rivera, Vice Minister for Economic Affairs in MIREX addressed the participants in his capacity as the chief guest. Aforementioned automobile associations and automobile companies doing business with India such as Santo Domingo Motors, Lasa Motors, Magna Motors, Viamar Motors shared their experience of doing business with India. From India, Mr. Vinnie Mehta, Director General of ACMA and Ms Krishnakoli Dutta of Ola Electric made their presentations virtually.

28. Ms. Biviana Riveiro, Executive Director of Export and Investment promotion agency of DR (ProDominicana) and Mr. Marcial Smester, Director of Investment participated in the 9th CII Conclave held in New Delhi from 3-4 August 2023 during which a MoU was signed for collaboration between ProDominicana and Invest India.

29. The Embassy organized an event titled “Indian Automobile Industry: Opportunities for Dominican Republic Business” in collaboration with the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Santo Domingo, and the Anamara Auto Association of the Dominican Republic in the premises of Chamber of Commerce, Santo Domingo on 24 October 2024. Approximately 30 prominent business delegates from the Dominican Republic’s auto industry participated, including representatives from Magna Motors, Lama Motors, Grupo Haina, Equimax and other major automotive businesses. A virtual presentation on the upcoming Bharat Mobility Expo 2025 was delivered by representative from the Engineering Export Promotion Council of India (EEPC). The presentation outlined the scope and potential of the Indian automobile industry and the technological advancements being showcased at the expo.

30. The Mission jointly organized a Millet promotion event with the Foreign Ministry Ministry of External Relations (Mirex) on 01 September 2023 at their premises to celebrate the International Year of Millets (IYOM). The gathering of around 70 people which included members of diplomatic corps, businessperson, media, Mirex and other government officials were addressed by Amb Jose Julio Gómez, Vice-Minister of Bilateral Relations, Mr. Rafael Ortiz Quezada, Vice Minister of Scientific and Technology Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ambassador. The Mission displayed samples of millet-based products and also served the gathering with Indian delicacies made from millet based products.

31. Mission in collaboration with the main three tour operators and travel agents' associations of DR namely, i) Bolsca Touristica Exchange (BTC), ii) Association of Inbound Tour Operators (OPETUR) and iii) Association of Travel Agents of Dominican Republic (ADAVIT) organized a conference "Incredible India : Destination for all" on 20 September, 2023 in Santo Domingo. This was the first major tourism promotion event after opening of the Embassy in January 2022.

The event also featured a presentation on Incredible India which showcased insights into tourists destination, Indian cultural heritage, hospitality, Indian culinary delights and unique features like Yoga and Ayurveda wellness tourism.

32. Embassy organized a seminar on “Doing Business with India” on 17 January, 2024 at Santo Domingo Chamber of Commerce. The guests of the honour of the event were Mr. Hugo Riveria Fernandez, Vice Minister of Economic and International Cooperation of the Ministry of External Relations and Mr. Jorge Morales Paulino, Vice Minister of Industry Commerce and Small Scale Industries of the Government of Dominican Republic. The program also featured a presentation on exploring business opportunities in India by the representative of Invest India. Handbooks in Spanish on Opportunities with India (La Oportunidad INDIA) were handed over to the guests. Renowned experts in business and trade doing business with India from Dominican Republic shared their experiences of working with India. The program was well attended by a diverse group of about 70 delegates and guests which included business professionals, entrepreneurs including members of Chambers of Commerce based in the country, Association of hardware engineering, textile industries, automobile sector, energy, and pharmacy sector.

33. To promote India as tourism destination a **bus campaign** with Incredible India picture on the rear side of state-run route bus was organized for 2 months from 10 October to 10 December 2022 (Taj Mahal, UP). The second Incredible India bus campaign was organized from 01 March to 30 April 2023 (Hampi, Karnataka), the third from 20 July to 20 September 2023 (Hawa Mahal, Rajasthan), fourth in the months of Nov-Dec 2023 (Golden Temple) and fifth one in the months of Jan-Feb 2024 (Konark Sun Temple).

34. Indian pharmaceuticals majors such as Glenmark, Hetero (Seven Pharma), Caplin Point MSN Labs and Reliance Life Sciences have their representatives in DR. Many other pharmaceutical companies present in the region such are doing good business in DR.

35. Indian auto majors such as Bajaj, Hero, TVS and Eicher Motors sell their products through local partners. Other four-wheeler brands like Hyundai, Suzuki and Kia source their small cars from India.

36. The Indian Chamber of Commerce exists since long but was not functional. Embassy made efforts to revive the Chamber. In August 2024, the Chamber held its Ordinary General Assembly and elected new board members.

### **Cooperation in Science & Technology**

37. An **IT Centre for Excellence** in Santiago, DR with the assistance of GOI. The Centre was inaugurated by the President Dr. Leonel Fernandez Reyna in August 2011. CDAC India ran the

Centre with three Indian faculty members for two years. The centre is functioning and is part of free zone owned and managed by private sector.

38. 18 DR professionals were trained at a customized course on **Cyber Security and Malware Analytics** from 21 November 2022 to 16 December 2022 at C-DAC, Mohali. In another special course on **Remote Sensing**, 14 Dominican professionals were trained at IIRS, Dehradun from 9 January to 3 March 2023. 12 Government Officials from Government Office of Information and Communication Technologies (OGTIC), MIREX, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MESCYT) and Central Bank participated in the special course in **Responsible Artificial Intelligence** at CDAC Delhi from 1-12 July 2024.

39. 02 Dominican professionals attended the UNISpace Nano Satellite Assembly & Training (UNNATI) organized by ISRO from 15 October 2022 to 15 December 2022 at UR Rao Satellite Centre, Bengaluru. There is no formal space agency in DR. The space programme is being run by INTEC university which formally started working on developing a satellite in 2019 in collaboration with Italian Space Agency. DR seeks an ISRO seminar to be held in Santo Domingo in the near future.

### **ITEC and Bilateral Assistance**

40. Under the ITEC programme, the Government of India has been offering annual slots to the Dominican Republic for training in various institutions in India since 1999. Currently 25 slots are being offered annually.

41. DR is also being offered slots under PCFD programme run by the SSIFS. Till date 13 DR diplomats have undergone training programmes at SSIFS including a special course for 8 diplomats in 2018. In June 2021, a special virtual session on 'Reformed Multilateralism' was organized by SSIFS with the participation of 72 diplomats/students from INESDYC (DR Diplomatic Institute) and diplomats from their Missions in Geneva and New York. The 2nd special course for 21 DR diplomats was organized by SSIFS in New Delhi from 20-29 September 2023.

42. A large quantity of life saving drugs worth USD 50,000 was donated to the DR Foreign Minister in March 2006. The donation was very well appreciated by the DR Government. There had been widespread damage to life and property in Dominican Republic due the Tropical Storm Noel in Oct-Nov 2007. Upon the official request of the Government of Dominican Republic, India donated the medicines as humanitarian assistance.

43. In April 2020, India had donated 200,000 tablets of Hydroxychloroquine to the DR. India again donated second tranche of 536 boxes of medicines weighing 7170 kgs and Protective gears



to DR. The donation included antibiotics, analgesics, antiviral, vitamins, diuretics, surgical gowns and gloves, as well as sampling tubes, swabs and thermometers, among other supplies. Foreign Minister Miguel Vargas thanked, in particular, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and EAM Dr. S Jaishankar, for deepening the ties of friendship between the two countries through cooperation.

44. On 18 February 2021, India donated 30,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to DR. India was the first responder and this fact is very much appreciated by the leadership of DR. The gesture was publicly acknowledged repeatedly by Foreign Minister Alvarez who said it was like ‘a soothing balm’ and President Abinader told Ambassador ‘We will never forget the help of India’ during presentation of credentials.

45. Under the Vaccine Maitri Initiative, SII (Serum Institute of India) supplied 20,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to DR in February 2021 as part of a commercial deal between the DR Government and SII which was received by the Vice President and Head of Health Cabinet Ms. Raquel Pena. Second and final tranche of 90,000 doses of vaccines reached DR on 17 January 2022.

### **Cultural relations**

46. A logo contest contest was rolled out in both the countries to mark the celebration of 25 years of establishment of diplomatic relations jointly by the Embassy and the Dominican Embassy in New Delhi. Syed Momin Iqbal from India was declared winner on 26 March 2024 winning a prize money of USD 1000.

47. The first ever **National Day Reception** in Santo Domingo was hosted on 26 January 2023 which received very good response. Vice Minister Jose Julio Gómez was the chief guest. ICCR sponsored Odissi dance troupe performance and Indian cuisine were highlights of the event. First Lady Raquel Arbaje was the chief guest for the **second National Day Reception** hosted on 26 January 2024.

48. ICCR sponsored **Odissi dance troupe** led by Ms. Ranjana Gauhar visited Dominican Republic from **24-31 January 2023**. The group performed at Centro Leon in Santiago, City Hall in Salcedo and Ágora Mall and Teatro Nacional in Santo Domingo. Local hospitality was extended and venues arranged by Mirex.

49. Embassy organized ‘**India Week**’ from 23 to 29 January 2023 with the theme ‘Namaste India’ in Ágora Mall. The event was inaugurated by Amb Jose Julio Gomez, Vice Minister of Bilateral Relations of the Foreign Ministry. The inauguration ceremony included chanting of Vedic Mantras, Yoga demonstration and fashion show with Indian traditional clothes of different states of India. The week witnessed enthusiastic participation of locals included Indian food

stall, Ayurveda products stall, Indian tourism package stall, Indian garment and accessories stall, photo booth with Taj Mahal backdrop, henna stall and stall for saree draping and wearing of Indian traditional clothes. On stage activities included dance performance by ICCR sponsored Odissi dance troupe, Yogathon competition with Suryanamaskars and talk session on benefits of Ayurveda. The videos of Incredible India were streamed throughout the week.

50. 2nd edition of the '**Namaste India Week**' was held at Agora Mall from 8-12 April 2024. The inauguration ceremony was attended by many Ambassadors and foreign ministry officials. The inauguration featured fashion show with Indian traditional clothes. The week saw enthusiastic participation at the saree draping stall, henna stall, food stall and Indian ayurvedic and artefacts stalls. Other activities included yoga sessions, Indian dance performances by a local artist, vedic chanting, talk sessions on ayurveda/henna etc. Agora Mall also lit the facade of the mall with Indian tricolour on the inauguration day.

51. A special yoga session was organized for Foreign Ministry officials on 23 September 2022. The Embassy collaborated with INFOTEP (National Skill Development Agency) to train 24 yoga teachers for 30 weeks which culminated in February 2023. This initiative received very good appreciation from DR. The second course with 18 participants culminated in November 2023. Third course with 21 participants concluded in March 2024.

52. On request of Embassy, Foreign Office lit its premises in **Indian tricolor** on 15 August 2022, 26 January 2023, 15 August 2023, 26 January 2024, 15 August 2024 on the occasion of National Days of India and on 4 May 2024, in commemoration of 25th Anniversary of establishment of India-Dominican Republic diplomatic relations.

53. As part of AKAM celebrations, the Embassy organized '**Know-India Quiz**' contest on Instagram platform from 14-25 November 2022. The winners were awarded with prizes sponsored by Indian companies based in DR. This created lot of interest towards India in social media of DR. The second contest was organized from 05-16 June 2023 and the third contest was organized from 23 Sep-4 October 2024.

54. Two **journalists** from DR Mr. Luís González and Mr. Tavaréz Suarez visited India for '**familiarization visit**' organized by the Ministry for LAC countries from 22-29 March, 2023.

55. A group of Dominican youth leaders comprising of Luis Báez, Deputy Representative of the Province of Peravia; Natalia Mármol, Civil Rights Activist; and Roselvis Vargas, Strategic Communication Advisor of the Social Policy Cabinet of the Presidency participated in ICCR's 6th **GenNext Program** from 10-19 October 2022.

56. On 29 April 2023, EAM inaugurated 'India Pavillion' at the prestigious '**Faro á Colon**' museum. The pavillion is decorated with wall size posters depicting tourist places, art and

culture of India. Some artifacts procured from India are also on display.

57. On 29 April 2023, EAM Dr. Jaishankar and FM Álvarez jointly unveiled the **statue of Mahatma Gandhi** supplied by ICCR. The City Council renamed the park where the statue is placed as Mahatma Gandhi Plaza. On [2 October 2023](#), the Embassy in collaboration with the Santo Domingo City Council organized the 154th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi/ International Day of Non Violence at the plaza.

58. DR had also participated in a big way in the celebration of **150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**. The government of Dominican Republic launched a stamp commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at the Foreign Ministry in Santo Domingo in August 2019. Around 20,000 copies of this stamp were printed.

59. To commemorate 153rd Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and International Day of Non-Violence, Embassy organized several events in October 2022 including seminar-cum-exhibition in Colegio Mahatma Gandhi and seminar and screening of movie 'Gandhi' in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture. An exhibition on life of Mahatma Gandhi was organized in the popular Ágora mall. Ambassador addressed the Masters' students of various defense institutes of Dominican Republic on 'Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of Truth and Non-violence- its relevance today' on invitation Higher Institute for the Defence of Ministry of Defence on 7 November 2022. On 2 October 2023, the Embassy in collaboration with the Santo Domingo City Council organized the 154th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi/ International Day of Non Violence at the Mahatma Gandhi Plaza, Gazcue, Santo Domingo. This was the first such celebration at the Plaza after the statue was unveiled by Hon'ble EAM during his visit to DR in April 2023. Embassy celebrated Gandhi Jayanti on 2 October 2024 at Mahatma Gandhi Plaza in Santo Domingo, commemorating Mahatma Gandhi's 155th birth anniversary. The event, held in partnership with the city government of Santo Domingo, drew participation from St George International School students, Rehabilitation Centre Hogar Crea inmates, and DR friends of India. Students delivered speeches on Gandhi's life and principles and 30 books, "Stories from the Life of Gandhi," were distributed to the students.

60. The Indian community in DR with the support of the Indian Embassy in Havana have been regularly celebrating **International Day of Yoga** in Santo Domingo. In 2022, the first celebration after establishment of the Embassy, International Day of Yoga was organized in 12 cities across the DR in association with various local organizations. The event in Santo Domingo attracted more than 1500 participants. The principal event of IDY in 2023 was organized at the Convention Centre of the Ministry of Defence with more than 2000 participants. Defence Minister Carlos Luciano Díaz Morfa was the chief guest. In addition, IDY was organized 12 more cities across Dominican Republic. On 16 June 2024, the Embassy celebrated the 10th International Yoga Day at the iconic Plaza de la Bandera in Santo Domingo. The celebration

saw the participation of resident Ambassadors, government officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs,, as well as around 500 yoga enthusiasts and practitioners.

61. On the occasion of 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of India's Independence, the Embassy of India in collaboration with the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), organized a **Food Festival** from **6-10 August 2017** at Embassy Suites, Hilton, Santo Domingo. Ministry of Culture, Government of India sponsored a 9-member **Kathak dance group** led by Ms. Shubhada Dubey and they performed on **12<sup>th</sup> August 2017** in Santo Domingo. In addition, Embassy also organized a Photographic Exhibition on the 'Heritage Architecture of India' in Santo Domingo from 7-27 August 2017.

62. **Indian food festivals** were held in Santo Domingo in October, 2013 and March and October, 2014. **Indian Film Festival** was organized on DR Television during April 2014 and from 11-23 August 2016 by the Directorate General of Cinema of DR.

63. 'Living Arts' an ICCR sponsored **Rajasthani Dance Troupe** visited Dominican Republic from **2-7 October 2008**. This was the first cultural visit at Government level. An 8-member martial arts group "**Hindustani Kalari Sangam**" from Kerala sponsored by ICCR, performed two shows in Santo Domingo on **8-9 November, 2010** in collaboration with the Dominican Ministry of Culture. A **Rajasthani folk dance troupe** performed in DR in **February, 2015**. ICCR sponsored 10-member **Kathak group** led by Ms. Shovana Narayan performed at Bellas Artes Theater, Santo Domingo on **28 March 2017**.

64. An exhibition on Gandhi was organized at the Global Foundation in May 2006 and in Colegio Mahatma Gandhi in September 2006.

### **Indian Community**

65. At present, there are about 100 Indian nationals and people of Indian origin living in the country. Some of them are working as engineers, software experts or representing Indian companies. Several businesspersons also form part of the community. Indians are scattered across DR and live in Santo Domingo, Puntacana, Puerto Plata, Santiago cities. Embassy's efforts to bring them together under an Indian Association haven't been successful so far. Indian spiritual organisations such the Art of Living, Swaminarayan Gurukul temple, Paramahansana Yogananda meditation centres, ISKCON temple and Satya Sai Baba of Puttapparth have presence in DR and there are many followers across the country.

66. Indian Cuisine is quite sought after but presently there are only three Indian restaurants in DR - two in Santo Domingo one in Punta Cana.

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*October 2024*