

India - Guatemala Relations

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.
- Agreement for visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders signed in May, 2015.

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.

Bilateral Visits from Guatemala:

2005 (May): Mr. Jorge Britz, Minister of External Relations

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

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

2014 (Oct.): Mr. Carlos Raúl Morales, Foreign Minister, 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.

**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 (April-June)	05.19	068.19	73.18	--

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

Commercial Engagements: 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 sold in Guatemala. Many Indian pharmaceutical products are being sold in Guatemala

through representatives. 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) have also entered the 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.

ITEC: Guatemala is an ITEC partner country since 1997- 98. The Government of India has offered 35 ITEC slots to Guatemala for 2017-18.

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.

Cultural Exchanges:

Cultural cooperation so far has been limited to Indian cultural troupes visiting from India to Guatemala. A 15-member Odissi dance troupe visited Guatemala for a performance "Shyama" on 18th October, 2011. Academic and other linkages are being encouraged and visits by Indian academicians have been well received. The Embassy organized a tourism road-show in Guatemala in association with India Tourism Office in New York in December, 2015.

International Day of Yoga: There are numerous yoga schools in Guatemala with considerable followers. The Third International Day of Yogawas celebrated on 18th 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 500 persons. Brahma Kumaris, Hare Krishna and Sathya Sai Baba have followers in Guatemala. Indian festivals like Holi and Diwali are also celebrated 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 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 20 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.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India in Guatemala website: <http://www.indemguatemala.org>

Embassy of India, Guatemala Facebook page:

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

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

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