

India- Suriname bilateral relations

Political

India enjoys close, warm and friendly relations with Suriname, reinforced by cultural and people to people contacts bridged by Indian Diaspora's arrival dating back to one and a half century. Several high level visits have been exchanged since the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Suriname in 1976 with the Indian Embassy opened in Paramaribo in 1977 and the Surinamese Embassy in New Delhi in 2000.

Hon'ble President of India Mrs. Droupadi Murmu's maiden foreign visit to Suriname from 04-06th June 2023, marked a significant milestone in the bilateral relations between the two countries. She was a State Guest at the 150th Anniversary of the arrival of Indians in Suriname. President Murmu was accompanied by a delegation, including the Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, and Rural Development, Smt. Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti, and Smt. Rama Devi, MP (Lok Sabha), along with other high-ranking officials. During her visit, President Murmu was bestowed with the prestigious 'Grand Order of the Chain of the Yellow Star', the highest civilian honor of Suriname. Additionally, several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed; cooperation in the regulation of medical products, recognition of the Indian Pharmacopeia, and the formulation of a Joint Work Plan for Agriculture and Allied Sectors for the period of 2023-2027.

On 20 November 2024, India's PM Shri Narendra Modi held high level meeting with Suriname's former President Chandrikapersad Santokhi on the sidelines of 2nd India-CARICOM leaders' summit held in Georgetown, Guyana and discussed matters of mutual concern.

Earlier, in January 2023 former President Chandrikapersad Santokhi paid a successful visit to India. He addressed the PBD Convention on 9th January and delivered a keynote address at the Madhya Pradesh Global Investors Summit 2023. In his meeting with PM Modi, discussions took place on a wide range of topics of the bilateral interests. President Santokhi paid a visit to Somnath Temple in Gujarat and Shri Mahakaleshwar Temple in Ujjain as well the Jamnagar Refinery and Petrochemicals complex. PM Modi and President Santokhi also interacted at COP26 in Glasgow.

Former President Ram Nath Kovind was warmly received by Suriname in June 2018, along with a distinguished delegation. This visit witnessed the signing of several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) that emphasized collaboration between electoral authorities, the National Archives, diplomatic institutes, the establishment of a Center of Excellence in ICT, and the remunerative employment of dependents of the diplomatic personnel of the two countries.

Suriname's Former Vice President of Suriname H.E Ashwin Adhin (Now Chairman of the National Assembly) paid two visits to India – a private visit in March 2015 and again in

January 2017 as the special guest in Youth PBD. On both occasions, he met with PM Modi. He held meetings with the Ministers of AYUSH and the Road Transport and Shipping. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu met Mr. Ashwin Adhin on September 09, 2018, on the margins of World Hindu Congress in Chicago and discussed bilateral relations including trade, investment, developmental cooperation and people to people contacts between the two countries.

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Suriname between 05-08 May 2026 and co-chaired the 9th Joint Commission Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Business and Cooperation, Mr. Melvin Bouva and also met Suriname President Dr. Jennifer Simons and Chairman of the National Assembly, Dr. Ashwin Adhin. The EAM also met Ambassador Albert Ramdin, then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Suriname, during the India-COFCOR Meeting in Guyana on 21 April 2023. Earlier they met at the 4th India-CARICOM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New York on 23 September 2022. FM Ramdin also virtually participated in Foreign Ministers' Voice of Global South Summit 2.0 on 17.11.2023 hosted by India. EAM met with then FM Yldiz Pollack Beighle on the sidelines of the 73rd UNGA on 26 September 2018.

From 28-31 August 2022, an Indian Parliamentary delegation, led by Shri Om Birla, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, consisted of esteemed Members of Parliament, including Smt Veena Devi (Lok Sabha), Shri Ravi Kishan (Lok Sabha), and Shri KR Suresh Reddy (Rajya Sabha) visited Suriname. The visit strengthened bilateral ties and several MoUs were signed focusing on areas such as health, standards, parliamentary collaboration, and cultural exchange.

A Parliamentary delegation from Suriname, led by H.E. Mr. Marinus Bee, Chairman of the National Assembly of Suriname, visited India from 04.02.2024 to 11.02.2024 and called on President Murmu, former Vice-President and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Dhankhar, Lok Sabha Speaker Birla, and EAM.

A five member Surinamese delegation consisting of a member of the National Assembly, representatives from Foreign and Health Ministries, participated in the 2nd WHO Global Summit on the Traditional Medicine held from 17-19 December 2025 in India. Another delegation led by Mr. Andrew Baasaron, Minister of Economic Affairs, Entrepreneurship and Technological Innovation, visited India from 16-20 February 2026 to participate in the India AI Impact Summit. Minister of Natural Resources, David Abiamfofo accompanied by Drs. Valerie Lalji, Director of Energy visited India between 27-30 October 2025 to participate in 8th Session of International Solar Alliance Assembly.

Several other visits of Ministers have taken place in recent years to enhance the bilateral and multilateral cooperation and develop understanding in that sphere. Former Minister of Defense Ms. Krishnakoemarie Mathoera, and Minister of Economic Affairs, Entrepreneurship, and Technological Innovation Ms. Rishma Kuldipsingh, from Suriname visited India and participated in the Kumbh Global Summit in February 2025. Finance Minister of India Nirmala Sitharaman met with the Surinamese counterpart Armand Achaibersingh at IMF HQ in April 2022. A defence delegation from Suriname also attended Aero India 2025. MOS Gen (Rtd) V.K. Singh visited Paramaribo in April 2017 for the 6th

JCM when he had bilateral meetings with the President, Vice President and Foreign Minister of Suriname. Minister of Economic Affairs, Entrepreneurship and Technological Innovations Ms. Rishma Kuldipsingh visited India in June 2023 to attend the Global Digital Public Infrastructure Summit when the IndiaStack MoU with Suriname was signed. Suriname Petroleum oil & gas company- Staatsolie delegation held a meeting with Indian Petroleum company representatives and Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG) in July 2024 in India. Suriname also had presence in the virtual Voice of the Global South Summits held at several occasions.

Development Partnerships

India and Suriname have bilateral mechanisms to enhance bilateral cooperation such as Ministerial level Joint Commission Meetings, Joint Working Group on Agriculture. In 1992, India and Suriname agreed to a Ministerial level bilateral mechanism under which nine Joint Commission Meetings (JCMs) have been held since 1994. EAM Jaishankar led Indian delegation attended the 9th JCM in Paramaribo in May 2026.

India and Suriname have actively cooperated on development partnership and India has offered Line of Credits (LOCs), cumulatively to the tune of US\$ 60 million over the years. A debt restructuring agreement was approved by the Indian side and signed by the Suriname side on 22 March 2023. Suriname side signed a “Dollar Credit Line Restructuring Agreement” with EXIM Bank of India. The LOCs have been utilized by Suriname for infrastructure development and enhancing capacity of strategic sectors.

Under Social Welfare initiative of India, India extended food security assistance to Suriname for about the value of about USD 10 million. Under the initiative (about 132 full size containers) 28 food items were delivered from India in three tranches in 2025.

In September 2019, PM Modi announced a US\$1 million grant for each CariCom member-State for community development projects under the India-UNDP Fund. Under this grant, project “Enhance early warning service delivery to communities of Suriname in order to build their resilience to flooding due to excess rainfall” at cost of US\$.25 million has been completed and other two projects repair of a swimming pool and stadium (\$400,000) and construction of a building for CEIT (\$350,000) has also been approved under this fund.

Under the US\$ 1mn Grant for SME Sector by supplying Machinery from India, announced by our EAM during his India-COFCOR meeting in Guyana, Suriname established a passion fruit packaging and processing unit. NABCONS (implementation partner in this project) carried out feasibility study in July, 2024 and found the project fit for implementation and accordingly facility has been commissioned with Indian support and technical handover took place on 07th May 2026, in presence of EAM Jaishankar.

Following four community development related small Quick Impact Projects have also been completed; ‘Promoting recreational activities for the society in Nickerie by rehabilitating the DC Roblesplein’, ‘Supporting ICT education of TVET secondary schools in Suriname by upgrading IT Equipment at the Educational Classroom of NATIN’, ‘Supporting various sports facilities in Suriname by setting up a synthetic jogging track at

Lelydorp in the District of Wanica’, ‘Sustainable Support of a chemical teaching laboratory at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (FWNW) of the Anton de Kom University of Suriname (AdeKUS) by amplification of the electrical network and purchase of relevant supplies’. Another project ‘installation of traffic light near Lyceum school is also ready for hand-over.

India provided lifesaving drugs and protective gear worth USD 100,000 to Suriname as Covid 19 relief grant and also, 50000 doses of Covid vaccines in March 2021. Essential medicines worth over USD 600,000 has also been provided to Suriname in August 2023.

In 2015-16, the Ministry of External Affairs, India (MEA) sanctioned grants totaling \$ 3,11,567.21 for the upgrading of the S' Lands Hospital morgue in Paramaribo. The \$ 1,69,400/- grant by MEA was also provided to the Institute for Natural Resources and Engineering Studies (NATIN) of Suriname. General V.K. Singh handed over a cheque of \$150,000 to the Government of Suriname as humanitarian assistance for the rehabilitation of victims of the devastating flood in Suriname, in 2017. In 2017, the Suriname government received grants of \$29,988/- for school-going children and \$37,250 for annual Christmas celebrations with senior citizens. Two small grant projects for community development and women entrepreneurship were announced during the visit of the President of India in June 2018, including a Craft Market place at Paramaribo for US\$ 175,602 and US\$ 109,800 for 200 computers for students. The first lady of India donated US\$10,000 to Mytyl School (special needs school) as charity. In August 2018, the Indian government provided cash assistance of US\$50,000 to the Government of Suriname for flood victims.

During the President Murmu's visit to Suriname, she visited two Indian temples, Arya Diwaker temple and Vishnu Mandir of Sanatana Dharma Mahasabha and also made a donation of US\$ 25000/- to each of these two organizations. A proposal from the Association Sanatan Dharm Maha Sabha (SDMS) for setting up a Shiva Dhama Vriddh Ashram, a nursing home for seniors in the District of Wanica (adjoining Paramaribo) an estimated budget of US\$ 2.8 million has also been approved in principle.

Both countries regularly collaborate in International forums and support the policies of mutual interests. Suriname also supports the idea of expansion of permanent members of UNSC. Suriname has Joined International Big Cat Alliance and International Solar Alliance.

Economy

Trade and economic links between India and Suriname are modest. Indian export to Suriname consists of boilers, machinery, iron & steel, electrical machinery & equipment, sound recorders, pharmaceutical products, textiles, vehicles, coffee, tea and spices, rubber, paper, tobacco, organic chemicals, furniture, carpets, ceramic products, footwear and printed books; Indian import consists of wood, aluminum, textiles, herbal products, garments, spices, and electrical machinery. Bilateral trade figures for the last three years are as follows (in US\$ million):

S. o	Financial Year	Export to Suriname	Import from Suriname	Total Bilateral Trade
1	2023-2024	29.25	22.60	51.85
2	2024-2025	28.55	32.80	61.35
3	2025-2026	26.69	20.98	47.67

There is potential for Indian companies to trade and invest in MSME in Agriculture & Food processing sector, Gold, Petroleum & Gas, Bauxite, Kaolin, Solar Energy, Hydro, Pharmaceuticals, Ayush/traditional medicine, Innovative technology, Tourism and IT. There are a few Indian companies doing mostly trading in Suriname.

On 7 March 2003, an MoU was signed to establish agricultural cooperation between India and Suriname, which led to the establishment of a Joint Working Group (JWG), providing a platform for specialists to exchange knowledge and deputation of experts in agriculture field. During President Murmu's Visit in June 2023, a five-year (2022–2027) JWG work plan was signed. On 4 October 2018, Mr. Lekhrum Soredjan, the Minister of Agriculture for Suriname, held bilateral discussions with his counterpart, Shri Radha Mohan Singh, in New Delhi, focusing on agricultural cooperation, support for rice development research, and the JWG plan for 2017–21. Suriname has received Buyers Credits worth USD 23.4mn from India, which were extended through the EXIM bank of India. USD 15 Mn. was utilized for the acquisition of vertical pumps for M/s Kirloskar. Additionally, a second project worth USD 8.4 Mn. was allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture of Suriname for the restoration of the Pumping Station of Wageningen, also facilitated by M/s Kirloskar. NTPC, is also working on an ISA demonstration grant project 'supply, installation, commissioning of solar water pumping solution' at the grant cost of \$40,174.

Two Indian Companies M/s Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited India and M/s Transrail are currently executing EPC projects for power transmission in Suriname.

A number of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) have been signed with the aim of promoting bilateral trade between India and Suriname. On 9 March 2018, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Suriname India Chamber of Commerce (SICCI) signed an agreement to enhance bilateral trade and economic relations. A new MOU was signed on 5 November 2018, by the SICCI and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). In August 2022, the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Suriname Standards Bureau signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen their mutual trade and expertise sharing in the areas of standards and conformity assessment activities. During President Santokhi's visit to India, the Economic Diplomacy Division of the MEA, in association with CII, FICCI, and ASSOCHAM, held a business meeting in Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat on 12 January 2023. A Surinamese government delegate also took part in the 9th CII India-LAC Conclave, from 3–5 August 2023.

Culture

Indian Cultural Centre in Suriname was opened in 1978 for promoting Indian cultural practices, Hindi language, classical dance, Yoga and classical music. India provided yearly grant worth US \$29500/- for promotion of Hindi in Suriname through Suriname Hindi Parishad until 2019. A 12- member ICCR-sponsored Bhangra Group performed on 26 & 27 November 2017 on the occasion of Deepavali and Independence Day of Suriname and a four member musical group led by Radhika Chopra sponsored by ICCR during the period 27 May– 07 June, 2018, participated in the 145th anniversary of the Indian arrival in Suriname. A Ramlila group from Ayodhya Research Institute visited Paramaribo in July-August 2018 and held several performances across Suriname.

An ICCR sponsored group 'Brij Sanskrit Kala Manch' performed Ras Leela, Mayur, and Deepak Dance performances in Paramaribo, Suriname on 22-23 October 2025 at two sites. A classical Kathak dance cultural troupe from India led by Dr. Samiksha Sharma performed in Suriname from 22-24 January in Paramaribo and Commovijene. In 2019 six member Rajasthani folk group led by Gazi Khan visited Suriname from February 16-20; an eight-member Qawwali group led by Mohammad Ahmad Warsi visited Suriname from 17-22 March 2019 on the occasion of Holi/Phagwa festival and held several performances; a Ramlila Group from Suriname participated in the Kumbh Mela 2019 sponsored by the Ayodhya Research Institute.

As part of the Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD) initiative, Indian festivals such as Holi-Phagwa, Diwali, Ayurveda Day etc. are celebrated with participation of dignitaries and diaspora. An MoU on Traditional Systems of Medicine was signed in January 2020. International Day of Yoga (IDY), is also celebrated with enthusiastic participation from citizens of Suriname.

A 75-week celebration of 75 years of India's independence named Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) was observed with a series of events culminating in a mega event on 15th August 2022. An ICCR sponsored, 10 Member Kathak group led by Rani Khanam was in Suriname from 01-06 June 2023. In addition to other performances in various events commemorating the 150 years of Indian arrival in Suriname, the group performed with the President of India and the President of Suriname as Chief Guests on 5 June 2023 at the Independence Square Paramaribo. Hindu organizations in Suriname also organized various ceremonies to commemorate the Pran Pratishtha ceremony held at the temple in Ayodhya city of India in Feb, 2024.

India supports the partner countries through its fully funded Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) courses. As a friendly country to India, Suriname is one of the largest beneficiaries in ITEC and several candidates have benefited from these courses. On 30 March 2024, 59th ITEC day was celebrated along with Holi festival and a dance group led by Mr. Bhola Pandey performed in 3 different districts and received huge audience from Suriname.

Indian community

The Indian diaspora, which constitutes over 27% of Suriname's population of about 6.2 lakhs (and some 50 Sindhi families) is connected with its roots in India. Suriname has also the distinction of the most prominent foreign country in the world in the field of promotion of Hindi language. Recognizing the Suriname as a Hindi language supportive country, Hindi speakers of the country has also been conferred world Hindi award for their work in promoting Hindi. In 2023, then deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Dr. Dew Sharman received World Hindi award.

The electronic travel authorisation system (eTVA) for Suriname has been implemented and vice versa. Both India and Suriname have implemented the MoU on waiver of visa for official and diplomatic passport holders. Due to the presence of large diaspora in Suriname, a large of OCI cards are issued. Recognizing the large diaspora in Suriname, OCI facility has also been made available upto 6th generation of PIOs.

Suriname, as an ITEC partner country, has made use of over 550 ITEC slots. Furthermore, several special training programmes are also attended by Suriname officials. Ms. Gajadin Raginie, Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in the 3rd Global South Young Diplomats Forum (GSYDF) held in New Delhi, India from 08-19 September 2025. In addition, three Surinamese diplomats participated in the 1st Special Course for Diplomats for Central & South America and Caribbean Islands in Oct-Nov. 2025 at SSIFS. In June 2019, two senior officers from Suriname participated in a specialized training program for CariCom mid-level/senior customs officers through ITEC. Additionally, more than 200 Surinamese diaspora have benefited from various programs and scholarships offered by the Government of India, including 164 Surinamese individuals through the Know India Programme, 26 through the Special Know India Programme for middle-aged diaspora, one through the SPDC scholarship for pharmacy in 2018-19, two who joined the Agra Hindi Sansthan in 2019, and three who pursued postgraduate/undergraduate courses under ICCR/AYUSH scholarship.

Useful Resources

Website: <https://www.indembassysuriname.gov.in/>

Facebook pages: <https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInSuriname>
<https://www.facebook.com/iccr.suriname>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/indembsuriname/>

Twitter: <https://x.com/indembsur?lang=en>

Youtube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoj4U_ST86i5GvkpwL8mbHA/videos

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