
INDIA-COSTA RICA BILATERAL BRIEF

Political

India and Costa Rica enjoy cordial and warm relations, which are being strengthened by the growing commercial engagement between the two countries. Following India's appointment of an Honorary Consul in San José in 1995, Costa Rica reciprocated by opening an Honorary Consulate in New Delhi in 1996. Costa Rica opened its Embassy in New Delhi in April 2010. The Indian Embassy in Panama is concurrently accredited to Costa Rica, and India appointed its Honorary Consul General in San José in 2022.

2. Bilateral relations have gained fresh momentum in recent years. The first-ever high-level visit from India to Costa Rica took place in March 2019, when the Vice-President of India visited San José, opening up new avenues of cooperation. Engagement has since broadened across multilateral, economic, scientific and cultural domains. Costa Rica participated in the 5th India–SICA Political Dialogue and Cooperation Mechanism in September 2025, and in February 2026 the Costa Rican Minister of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications took part in the India AI Impact Summit in New Delhi. Most recently, in May 2026, the Minister of State for External Affairs represented India at the inauguration of the new President of Costa Rica, reaffirming both countries' shared commitment to democracy, multilateralism and a rules-based international order.

Recent Visits

Incoming

February–March 1997: Foreign Minister Fernando Naranjo visited India — the first-ever visit by a Foreign Minister of Costa Rica to India.

February 2004: Vice Foreign Minister Marco Vinicio Vargas Pereira visited India as part of a SICA delegation.

June 2008: Foreign Minister Bruno Stagno, along with SICA Foreign Ministers, visited India for the 2nd India–SICA Foreign Ministers' meeting.

October 2010: Foreign Minister René Castro visited India for bilateral discussions and to inaugurate the Costa Rican Embassy in New Delhi.

March 2012: Minister for Foreign Trade Ms. Anabel González, accompanied by 25 Costa Rican entrepreneurs, visited India to participate in IndiaSoft 2012 in Hyderabad and held meetings with the Commerce Secretary, FICCI, CII and NASSCOM.

March 2013: Minister for Foreign Trade Ms. Anabel González visited India.

March–April 2014: Former President and Nobel Laureate Mr. Óscar Arias Sánchez visited India under the ICCR Distinguished Visitors' Programme.

2015: Minister of Foreign Trade Mr. Alexander Mora was a guest speaker at the NASSCOM Leadership Forum in Mumbai (February); Vice-Minister of Foreign Relations Mr. Alejandro Solano Ortiz visited for the second round of Foreign Office Consultations (March); and Second Vice-President Ms. Ana

Helena Chacón Echeverría, with Minister Mora, participated in the 6th India–Latin America and Caribbean Conclave in New Delhi (October).

September 2019: Vice Foreign Minister Ms. Lorena Aguilar Revelo visited India for the 14th Conference of Parties of the UNCCD.

November 2024: Alternate Judge of the Supreme Court of Justice Ms. Rosa María Acón participated in the 25th International Conference of Chief Justices of the World in Lucknow.

September 2025: Costa Rica participated in the 5th India–SICA Political Dialogue and Cooperation Mechanism, with Foreign Minister Mr. Arnaldo André reaffirming Costa Rica's commitment to India–SICA cooperation.

February 2026: Minister of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications Ms. Paula Bogantes Zamora visited New Delhi for the India AI Impact Summit, where she participated in a high-level panel with AI officials from the UAE, the United States and the Observer Research Foundation and praised India's leadership in AI for the Global South.

Outgoing

February 1996: Secretary (West) Shri V. K. Grover visited San José for discussions on NAM and the UN; Secretary (West) Shri M. Ganapathi visited for Foreign Office Consultations in August 2012.

April 2013: Minister of State for Commerce & Industry Smt. D. Purandeswari led a CII delegation to Costa Rica.

July 2015: Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. (Dr.) V. K. Singh (Retd.) made his first official visit, meeting Foreign Minister Mr. Manuel González Sanz, Vice-President and Finance Minister Mr. Helio Fallas, and Foreign Trade Minister Mr. Alexander Mora. An MoU on Technical Cooperation was signed during the visit.

October–November 2017: National Human Rights Commission members Shri P. C. Ghose and Shri Ambuj Sharma attended the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions Bureau meeting.

March 2019: The Vice-President of India visited Costa Rica — the first-ever high-level visit from India — accompanied by Minister of State for Tourism Shri K. J. Alphons and Member of Parliament Shri R. K. Kashyap. Areas identified for cooperation included eco-tourism, space, biotechnology, renewable and solar energy, ICT and e-governance, urban transport, e-vehicles, biosimilars and healthcare.

October 2019: Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri C. K. Mishra led a delegation to the Pre-COP 25 meeting in San José.

September 2021: Secretary (East) Ms. Riva Ganguly Das led the Indian delegation for Foreign Office Consultations, meeting Vice Minister of Bilateral Affairs and International Cooperation Ms. Adriana Bolaños Argueta.

April 2023: The External Affairs Minister participated in the India–SICA Foreign Ministers' meeting in Panama, in which Costa Rica's Minister of Information Technology took part.

June 2024: Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr. M. Ravichandran participated in the High-Level Event on Ocean Action in San José.

November 2025: The first India–Costa Rica Consular Dialogue was held in San José.

May 2026: Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Pabitra Margherita represented India at the inauguration of President Laura Fernández Delgado in San José.

Assumption of charge by Costa Rica's New Government in May 2026 :

Costa Rica held general elections on 1 February 2026. Ms. Laura Fernández Delgado of the Sovereign People's Party (Partido Pueblo Soberano) won the presidency in the first round, becoming the second woman to be elected President of Costa Rica, and her party secured a majority in the Legislative Assembly. She was sworn in as the 50th President of Costa Rica on 8 May 2026, at the National Stadium in San José, for the 2026–2030 term.

The Minister of State for External Affairs and Textiles, Shri Pabitra Margherita, represented India and the Prime Minister at the inauguration, conveying the greetings of the President, Prime Minister and people of India to the new President and Government of Costa Rica. This was the first high-level Indian engagement with the incoming administration. On the sidelines, he held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Mr. Manuel Tovar, in which both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to multilateralism, democracy and a rules-based international order and discussed deepening cooperation across the

bilateral agenda. During the visit, the Minister also inaugurated a new office centre of Feuji, a global Indian IT and deep-tech company; inaugurated a 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is one family) wall and paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi at the University for Peace in San José; planted a sapling under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative; and interacted with the Indian community. The engagement underscored the steady growth of India–Costa Rica ties in trade, technology and people-to-people contacts, and India's intent to build an early and constructive relationship with the new Government.

Multilateral Cooperation

Costa Rica signed the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement but has not yet ratified it. In 2025, Costa Rica joined the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), the second major coalition launched by India outside the United Nations, endorsing its charter to become a member.

Economic and Commercial Cooperation

Bilateral trade remains modest. India–Costa Rica bilateral trade stood at US\$ 338.87 million in 2024–25. India's principal imports from Costa Rica comprise wood and wood products, integrated circuits, pulp, iron and steel, edible nuts and coffee, while India's exports include chemicals, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, organic chemicals, rubber and plastics.

Costa Rica hosts a significant Indian corporate and IT presence. About 1,000 Indians and persons of Indian origin live in the country, and Indian information-

technology firms — including Infosys, HCL, L&T Infotech and Wipro — have a presence there. UPL established Costa Rica as its Central-Latin America headquarters in 2019; Mahindra and Muthoot also have local investments. In May 2026, Feuji, a global IT and deep-tech company, inaugurated a new office centre in Costa Rica, reflecting growing commercial and technology cooperation.

Costa Rica's environment-friendly policies have supported Indian automotive exports. Duty-free electric-vehicle import incentives (extended through 2024) facilitated the earlier arrival of 50 Reva electric cars; Mahindra Scorpio SUVs are imported in small batches; and Bajaj two- and three-wheelers are assembled locally by MASESA. Havells' former Latin American headquarters and factory (sold in 2014) now operate as Feilo Sylvania.

Education and Capacity Building

ITEC Programme: 25 training slots have been allotted to Costa Rica under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. In 2023–24, seven Costa Rican officials participated in a microgrid and renewable-energy course conducted by NTPC Ltd. in New Delhi under ITEC. In FY 2025–26, Costa Rica utilised 15 slots.

A Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) was set up by C-DAC at the National Technical University (UTN), Alajuela, in February 2016. APTECH deputed one head and two trainers from May 2016 to April 2018, after which the Centre has functioned with local faculty since October 2018.

Culture

Costa Rica's interest in India's culture dates to Prof. Hilda Chen Apuy, who after a 1950s UNESCO visit introduced Indian history, philosophy and Sanskrit at the University of Costa Rica (UCR). Prof. Adriana Molina later taught Sanskrit; a Chair of Indian Studies was announced during the Vice-President's March 2019 visit; and outreach now includes Prof. Roberto Morales Harley's Sanskrit primer and the 'Little Guru' Sanskrit app (2021). Cultural exchanges are active: an ICCR-supported Kuchipudi troupe performed at the National Theatre in October 2015; illustrator Wen Hsu and journalist Luis Alberto Muñoz toured India in 2014–15; and President Óscar Arias launched the Spanish edition of Gandhi's autobiography in 2008.

The International Day of Yoga has drawn around 300 participants annually since 2015, and a decree of 26 October 2018 declared yoga and meditation to be in the public interest and introduced yoga in school curricula, guided by ASOYOGA and the Costa Rica India Association (CRIA). The commemoration of Gandhi's 150th anniversary in October 2018 featured a rendition of "Vaishnav Jan To." Indian-Costa Rican actor-producer Prabhakar Sharan signed five joint-venture films with Eros International at EXPOCOMER Panama in March 2022. Culinary ties include at least ten Indian restaurants — notably "Naans & Curries" and "Taj Mahal" — the former winning ICCR's Annapurna award in 2023.

India's Development Assistance

India's development assistance to Costa Rica includes a donation of photovoltaic equipment worth Rs. 1.85 million in 1997 to establish a solar-

energy research laboratory at the University of Heredia under the ITEC programme; the donation of a telephone exchange to the Costa Rican telecom operator ICE in 1998; relief assistance of US\$ 25,000 for flood victims in 1996; 18 Bajaj three-wheelers for the San José police department in December 2005; and US\$ 100,000 for relief and rehabilitation following Hurricane Tomas in November 2010.

Visa and Consular Matters

Indian nationals may enter Costa Rica as tourists for a stay of up to one month if they hold a valid US, Schengen or Canadian multiple-entry tourist/business visa with at least six months' validity. Work authorisation and employment visas for spouses of Indian IT and other professionals, however, can take two to three years to process.

The first India–Costa Rica Consular Dialogue was held in San José in November 2025, led by the Ambassador of India and Costa Rica's Vice Minister of Bilateral Affairs and International Cooperation, Ms. Lydia Peralta. Discussions covered visas, consular access, migration, extradition and the further strengthening of bilateral relations.

Indian Community

Owing to Costa Rica's proximity to the United States and the presence of multinationals such as Intel, a number of IT professionals — including about 1,000 persons from India — are employed in the country's IT industry. The Indian diaspora also includes businessmen engaged in the export of wood,

persons working with NGOs, and the Missionaries of Charity. The Costa Rica India Association (CRIA), established in 2010, has been active in organising social, cultural and trade-promotion activities in collaboration with the Indian Embassy, including festive events around Diwali.

June 2026