

**Embassy of India  
Guatemala**

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**India-Guatemala Bilateral Brief**

**Political:**

India and Guatemala enjoy cordial and friendly relations. The diplomatic relations were established on 16 May 1972. This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Guatemala. Although, the Mission to Guatemala City was opened to 2010, during the recent years the political relations between Guatemala and India are in the path of upward higher trajectory. The visit of Hon'ble Vice President in May 2018 and MoS of External Affairs, Shri V. Muraleedharan in July 2021 to Guatemala gave boost in our bilateral relations. These high level exchanges from India to Guatemala have positively contributed to bilateral ties and cooperation; which has strengthened ties across a range of political, economic, commercial and cultural areas. Guatemala opened its Embassy in New Delhi in April 2013.

To Mark the 50th Anniversary, the Mission organized more than fifty major cultural and commercial programmes across the length and breadth of Guatemala. The celebrations culminated on 18 November, with the commemorative event, jointly organized by the Mission and Guatemalan Foreign Ministry, at the premises of the Foreign office in the presence of Foreign Minister Mr Mario Bucaro and Vice Foreign Ministers.

During the visit of MOS Shri V. Muraleedharan in July 2021 to Guatemala, the Hon'ble Minister called on the President of Guatemala, H.E. Dr Alejandro Giammattei, and met with then Foreign Minister Amb. Pedro Brolo Vila, and discussed various bilateral, regional and international issues. MOS participated in a Business event along with the Minister of Economy of Guatemala, Mr Tony Malouf, and Vice Foreign Minister Amb. Shirley Aguilar addressed business leaders and Heads of Chambers of Commerce & Industry of Guatemala.

The 2nd Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Guatemala were held virtually on 05 May 2021. During the FOC, both sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations, which included cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields. The two sides also explored the possibilities of collaboration in the areas of science and technology, space, energy, education, health and traditional medicine, agriculture, security and defence, and tourism.

Guatemala has been consistently supporting India at the multilateral stage over the years.

**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.

### **Trade and Economic:**

The trade relations between India and Guatemala are on the upswing. Guatemala emerged as India's biggest trading partner in the Central American Region in 2021-22 with bilateral trade of US\$ 573.21 million. Pharmaceuticals, textiles (especially cotton yarn and fibers), engineering products, automobiles- two and three wheelers, motor vehicles/cars, auto components and parts, iron and steel, industrial machinery and parts, electrical machinery and equipment are the top products exported to Guatemala while India mainly imports Wood, wood charcoal, Coffee, aluminum scrap from Guatemala. To promote bilateral trade further, Embassy in collaboration with Export Promotion Councils is organizing Hybrid Buyer Seller Meets, and so far organized 10 such meets this year.

### **India-Guatemala Trade** (in million US \$)

Year ( April - March)	Imports from Guatemala	Exports to Guatemala	Total trade
2017-2018	15.97	291.93	307.90
2018-2019	16.27	305.37	321.64
2019-2020	22.95	291.32	314.27
2020-2021	20.75	331.35	352.12
2021-2022	21.08	552.13	573.21

**Commercial Engagements:** There are around 15 Indian companies being represented in Guatemala from pharmaceuticals, textiles, automobiles and IT sectors. Hero motorcycles, Mahindra vehicles, TVS, Bajaj 2 and 3 wheelers are popular in Guatemala. Pharmaceutical companies including Caplin Point, CIPLA, Himalaya Drugs, Seven Pharma, Aurobindo, and MSN Labs are marketing their products in Guatemala through local agents or representative offices. Since Guatemala is strategically placed with the same time zone as the USA; these countries have become good destinations for investment in near shoring and IT and ITES. We have several Indian IT/BPO companies including HCL, 24\*7, and TCS. All these companies employ more than 10,000 Guatemalans.

**Grand "MADE IN INDIA" Trade Show:** To keep the momentum in our trade and to respond to the call of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, to look for new export opportunities, the Embassy, in collaboration with Ministry of Textiles, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts and 'Beti and Shiksha Foundation' organized immaculate 3-day "MADE IN INDIA" grand trade exhibition in Cayala from 22-24 September and on 21 September, organized an unique Weaves of India Thematic Fashion Show at the Guatemalan National Palace showcasing India's rich

textile tradition.

**Development Cooperation:** India's development cooperation has been robust with Guatemala. India has always extended the helping hand to Guatemala in its trying times especially when Guatemala was facing COVID-19 crisis, Government of India donated 200,000 doses of Made in India anti COVID vaccine to Guatemala in March 2021 and provided essential medicines and PPEs to Guatemala. Similarly, India has been a partner of Guatemala during challenging time and whenever required had supported the Government of Guatemala with monetary and material support like during Hurricane Stan in October 2005, in November 2009 for draught related recovery, for Disaster Relief in the aftermath of the earthquake that struck Guatemala in November 2012, for Drought relief in December 2014, in July 2018 towards disaster relief assistance for damages caused due to eruption of volcano Fuego.

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 in was handed over to the Guatemalans.

**ITEC:** Guatemala is an ITEC partner country since 1997- 98. The Government of India has offered 40 ITEC slots to Guatemala for 2019-20. However, due to the overwhelming response from Guatemala, 45 ITEC slots were utilized for 2019-20. Several of Guatemalans have also participated in e-ITEC courses. As of now around 210 Guatemalans have visited India under ITEC scholarships.

### **Cultural Relations:**

As India celebrates Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Mission has undertaken a special campaign to organize 75 major events across Guatemala to mark this important milestone. So far more than 50 major events have been organized. To mention a few, On 16 May, Embassy in association with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Culture of Guatemala organized a grand cultural ceremony at the Miguel Ángel Asturias National Theatre, to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Guatemala. The cultural event saw the mesmerizing performance by the ICCR sponsored Kathak troupe led by Ms Soniya Parchure. The event was attended by the more than 1500 Guatemalans. In the same week, the Kathak dance troupe performed in different locations across Guatemala including in Escuela Politecnica on 15 May, on 17 May, in 128 year old Quetzaltenango Municipality Theater, Guatemalan university UNIS on 19 May, and on the same day afternoon, at the Marisacl Zavala Military Station.

Similarly to mark the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas), the Mission organized Unity Concerts by ICCR sponsored Indian Music band Purple Fusion in the Guatemalan cities of Quetzaltenango, Antigua and Patzun in the first week of November 2022.

**The Largest Ever Yoga Festival in Central America:** On 12 November, Mission organized one of its kind, largest Yoga Festival in Central America, perhaps in LAC region, with the participation of more than 2500 people, at Mariscal Zavala Military Brigade. This largest-ever Yoga Festival in Central America was organized to

promote Indian culture and Yoga among Guatemalan people, especially women and children. The festival was inaugurated by Guatemala's only Olympic medalist and famous athlete Mr Erick Barrando in the presence of Ambassador Dr Manoj Kumar Mohapatra and Colonel Edgar Mendez, Commander of the Mariscal Zavala Military Brigade. Similarly, in June 2022, Mission organized International Day of Yoga at the world heritage city of Antigua, which was live broadcast on DD India as a part of Yoga Guardian ring.

**Indian Film Festival-**The Embassy has been organizing many Indian Film Festivals across length and breadth of Guatemala. Most recently, Embassy organized the film festivals in 7 different locations in the interiors of Guatemala. On 5-6 February, in collaboration with Ministry of Culture, Mission organized the film festival in the Miguel Angel Asturias National theatre in Guatemala City. From 8-15 November 2021, Embassy in collaboration with [vimeo.com](http://vimeo.com) organized Indian Film Festival showcasing seven Indian movies on the online platform.

**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 communities in Guatemala is small and consist of about 100 individuals in all, working in the Indian Call Centers, in export trade, in auto parts business, or in pharmaceutical industries. Most of them came to Guatemala during the last two decades. With Indian Community, Mission is celebrating Indian festivals like Holi and Diwali, and this year on 30 October, mission organized grand Diwali Festival with more than 150 people.

Besides, there are around 350 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. The Embassy of India constantly engages the Indian community in Livingston and invites them for National Day events and cultural programmes. Most recently, Embassy organized Holi Celebration in Livingstone with the community. In January 2022, for the first time ever, Embassy organized flag hoisting ceremony in Livingston on the occasion of the Republic Day and Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

**Useful Resources:**

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

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