

Guyana Visit

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Historic Visit to Guyana

Context:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Caribbean nation of **Guyana** marked a milestone as the first visit by an Indian PM in 56 years. The trip underscored India's commitment to strengthening historical, cultural, and strategic ties with Guyana and the Caribbean region. Guyana's **President Irfaan Ali** personally welcomed PM Modi at the airport, breaking protocol, a gesture highlighting the significance of the visit.

Key Highlights of the Visit

- **India-CARICOM Summit**

- PM Modi co-chaired the **2nd India-CARICOM Summit** with Grenada's PM and CARICOM leaders.
- The summit focused on areas like economic cooperation, sustainable development, and regional security.

- **Awarded the Order of Excellence**

- PM Modi was conferred with **Guyana's highest national award**, "The Order of Excellence," becoming the **fourth foreign leader** to receive it.

About CARICOM

CARICOM (Caribbean Community) is a regional bloc formed in 1973 under the **Treaty of Chaguaramas** to promote **economic integration** and sustainable development.

Key Features

- **Membership:** Comprises **15 Member States** and **6 Associate Members**, mostly island nations, except Belize, Guyana, and Suriname.
- **Four Pillars of Integration:**
 - **Economic Integration:** Focuses on the **Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME)**.
 - **Foreign Policy Coordination:** Ensures a unified global stance.
 - **Human and Social Development:** Prioritizes health, education, and youth development.
 - **Security Cooperation:** Addresses challenges like **crime** and **disaster management**.

Strategic Objectives of the Visit

1. Strengthening Historical and Cultural Ties

- Guyana hosts one of the oldest **Indian diasporas**, with **320,000 people of Indian origin**, forming **43.5% of its population**.

2. Energy Security

- Guyana is an emerging **global oil hub**, expected to surpass **Venezuela** in production by 2026.
- India sees an opportunity to **diversify crude oil imports** from Guyana's vast reserves.

3. Defence Collaboration

- India supplied **Dornier 228 planes** and provided a **Line of Credit** for defence equipment like patrol vehicles and radars.
- This marked India's **first defence credit line** with a Caribbean nation.

4. Enhancing Trade and Economic Partnerships

- India is actively involved in Guyana's development through:
 - **Infrastructure Projects**: National Cricket Stadium, solar traffic lights.
 - **Healthcare Upgrades**: Hospitals and ocean-going vessels.
 - **Agriculture**: Contributing millet seeds and enhancing food security.

5. Countering Chinese Influence

- China's **Belt and Road Initiative** investments in Guyana are significant.
- India is countering this by emphasizing **local partnerships**, including a **\$100 million road project** in Georgetown.

6. Global South Engagement

- PM Modi's visit reflects India's **Global South agenda**, focusing on fostering alliances with smaller, resource-rich nations.

Key Agreements Signed

India and Guyana signed **10 MoUs** to bolster cooperation in diverse areas:

- **Health**: Establishing **Jan Ausadhi Kendras** to provide affordable medicines.
- **Hydrocarbons**: Enhancing collaboration in **oil and gas value chains**.
- **Agriculture**: Promoting joint research, food security, and knowledge exchange.
- **Digital Payments**: Deploying an **India-like UPI system** in Guyana.
- **Defence**: Strengthening capabilities through skill-building initiatives.

Symbolic and Strategic Outcomes

- PM Modi participated in a **sapling plantation ceremony** under the campaign "**Ek Ped Ma Ke Naam**", symbolizing sustainability.
 - India's emphasis on **education, technology transfer, and Ayurveda** deepened bilateral cooperation.
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Conclusion

PM Modi's visit to Guyana represents a significant step in India's efforts to deepen ties with the **Caribbean region**. By focusing on historical connections, strategic partnerships, and sustainable growth, India is fostering a robust relationship with Guyana, ensuring mutual benefits in key sectors like **energy, defence, and trade**.



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