India Jamaica Bilateral Relations

Why in News?

Recently India dispatched 60 tonnes of emergency medical assistance to Jamaica.

What are the pillars of India -Jamaica relationship?

- **Jamaica** – It is one of the Caribbean island nation in between north and south American continents.



- **India & Jamaica** - Ties are rooted in 4Cs of Culture, Cricket, Commonwealth, and CARICOM.
- **Historical connection** - Jamaica is one of the Girmitya countries where more than 36,000 Indians were brought in the 19th century.

Girmitiya are those Indians who went abroad as indentured labourers under an agreement.

- **Indian diaspora** - 70,000 strong Indian diaspora act as a living bridge between India and Jamaica.
- **Diplomatic relation** – It was established in 1962 and a resident Mission was established in Kingston in 1976.

From India to Jamaica	From Jamaica to India
Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (1975)	Prime Minister Mr. Edward Seaga (March 1983- to attend the 7th NAM Conference)
Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee (February 1999-to attend the Ninth G-15 Summit in Montego Bay)	Minister of Foreign Trade Mr. Anthony Hylton (August 2001)
MOS for External Affairs Digvijay Singh (February 2003)	Minister of Industry, Commerce and Technology Dr. Phillip Paulwell (October 2001)
MOS for External Affairs Anand Sharma (February 2007)	Minister of State for Tourism and Culture Mr. Wykeham McNeille (January 2007- to attend the centenary celebrations of Satyagraha)
Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi (June 2013- to participate in the 5th Biennial Diaspora held in Montego Bay, Jamaica)	Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce Mr. Anthony Hylton (February 2014- to attend the NASSCOM India Leadership Forum)
Minister of State (MOS) for External Affairs General (Dr.) V. K. Singh (February 2015, April 2017)	Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Senator Kamina Johnson Smith (October 2017)
Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind (15-18 May 2022)	

- **Institutional Mechanisms** - The Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) serves as an important dialogue mechanism between India and Jamaica.
- **Agreements/MoUs**
  - The Cultural Agreement, signed in 1996, laid the foundation for cultural exchange.
  - In 2010, MoU for cooperation in Food Research and Technology was signed between the Scientific Research Council of Jamaica and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India.
  - Agreement for Cooperation in Civil Aviation was signed in 2016.
  - In 2021, High Commission of India, Kingston also signed an agreement with the Nature Preservation Foundation (NPF) for establishing an India-Jamaica Friendship Garden at the Hope Botanical Gardens.
- **Trade and Investment** - Bilateral trade has experienced significant growth over the past decade, increasing from USD 28.28 million in 2011-12 to 116.73 million in 2023-24.
  - **Main items of exports from India** - Pharmaceutical products, Vechicles other than railway or tramway rolling stock and parts and accessories thereof and seafood.
  - **Main items of import from Jamaica** - electrical machinery , pulp of wood or of other fibrous cellulosic material etc.

Year	India's Exports (US$ in millions)	India's Imports (US$ in millions)	Total (US$ in millions)
2020-21	64.06	2.23	**66.29**
2021-22	80.60	1.80	**82.4**
2022-23	87.75	4.99	**92.74**
2023-24	109.15	7.48	**116.63**
2024-25 (1 quarter)	20.40	2.80	**23.2**

Development Partnership
• A rural development project in Kitson Town is being implemented through the FAO with the US$ 1 million grant announced by PM Modi during the 1st India-CARICOM Summit in New York in 2019. • In March 2021, a gift of 50,000 doses of 'Made in India' COVID-19 vaccine was made to Jamaica under the 'Vaccine Maitri' initiative of the Indian government. • India extended a Line of Credit (LOC) in 2001 for import of water pumps from India (M/s Kirloskar Brothers Ltd).
Cooperation in Multilateral Organizations
• India and Jamaica cooperate in the multilateral fora with common views and positions on issues such as promoting South-South Cooperation.
Cultural Relations
• Jamaicans strongly relate their colourful festivities to the folkloric traditions and celebrations of India. • Popular festivals like Holi, Diwali, Onam, Navratri and Garba, Durga puja are celebrated with fanfare and religious fervour. • A statue of Mahatma Gandhi depicting the famous "Dandi March" donated by ICCR was installed at the University of West Indies, Mona Campus, Kingston in July 2012. • International Yoga Day is celebrated annually in Kingston, Jamaica. • In December 2021, six participants from Jamaica visited India under ICCR's Distinguished Visitor's Programme titled "Gen-Next Democracy Network" Programme. • 10th May is celebrated as India Heritage Day in Jamaica.

- **Indian Diaspora** - Jamaica is home to an Indian diaspora of approximately 70,000, whose ancestors arrived as indentured labourers primarily from Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Basti, Deoria, and Gorakhpur between 1845 and 1917.
- **Indian Diaspora Conference** - It is a first of its kind, was organised on 26 March 2023. More than 400 Indian diaspora members participated in the Conference.

What are the recent developments?

- **IRIS participation** - In 2021, Jamaica Prime Minister participated in the launch of Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) on the sidelines of COP26 in Glasgow.
- **ISA membership** - Jamaica has signed and ratified the International Solar Alliance

(ISA) and is now a full-fledged member.

- **CDRI membership** - Jamaica has also joined the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- **First Jamaican PM visit** – Jamaican Prime Minister HE Dr. Andrew Holness visited India in October 2024.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure Cooperation** - Jamaica seeks to replicate India's achievements in using digital infrastructure, particularly during COVID-19, to strengthen its own economy and improve access to services.
- **Digital Payments Partnership** - Egov Jamaica Limited signed an agreement with NPCI International Payments Limited (India) to adopt India's UPI (Unified Payments Interface) technology.
- **Cultural Exchange Programme** - An MoU on the Cultural Exchange Program was signed for the period 2024-2029 to promote cooperation between cultural institutions, strengthening bilateral relations through art, heritage, and education.
- **Sports Cooperation** - An MoU on cooperation in sports was signed to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise in sports development and management.

References

1. MEA | India Jamaica
2. India News | India Jamaica Key Agreements

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