

26– 11 – 2024

News: India-CARICOM Summit

- Recently, the Prime Minister of India chaired the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit in Georgetown, Guyana, alongside the Prime Minister of Grenada, the current CARICOM Chair.

Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

- Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is a **grouping of 21 countries: 15 Member States and 6 Associate Members** including both island states and mainland territories like Suriname and Guyana.
- CARICOM was founded in 1973 with the signing of the Treaty of Chaguaramas by four founding members of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.
- **Diversity:** The community is made up of people from African, Indian, European, Chinese, Portuguese, and Indigenous backgrounds.
- **Population:** Approximately 16 million, with a young demographic, 60% under the age of 30.
- **Languages:** The region is multilingual, with English as the primary language, alongside French, Dutch, and various African and Asian languages.

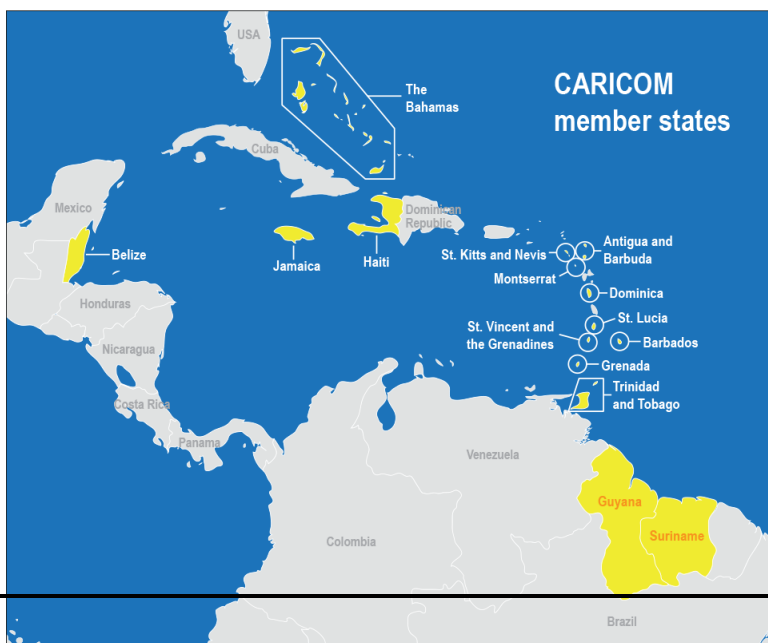
- **Geographical Spread:** The member states stretch from The Bahamas in the north to Suriname and Guyana in the south, making it a vast and diverse region with varying levels of economic and social development.
- They are primarily located in the Caribbean Sea (Atlantic Ocean).

Pillars of CARICOM's Integration: CARICOM's integration is built on four main pillars, which guide the objectives of the Community:

- **Economic Integration:** Enhance development and competitiveness through trade and productivity.
- **Foreign Policy Coordination:** Present a unified voice in international diplomacy.
- **Human and Social Development:** Focus on health, education, and poverty alleviation.

➤ **Security:**

Strengthen regional security, disaster response, and crime prevention.



India-CARICOM Relations

- In November 2003, a CARICOM delegation visited India, leading to the establishment of a Standing Joint Commission.
- India's High Commissioner in Georgetown (Capital of Guyana) is also accredited as Ambassador to CARICOM, highlighting its commitment to regional cooperation.
- First Meeting of India-CARICOM Foreign Ministers (2005) laid the groundwork for closer collaboration, particularly in areas like trade and development projects through the Caribbean Development Bank.
- First India-CARICOM Joint Commission (2015) held in Georgetown which led to promotion of business partnerships between India and CARICOM countries.

- **India-CARICOM Ministerial Meetings** are held regularly, with notable events occurring on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** In 2017, after hurricanes in the Caribbean Sea, India provided USD 200,000 in emergency aid and additional support through the India-UN Partnership Fund for South-South Cooperation.
- **India-CARICOM Summit (2019)** took place in New York on the sidelines of the UNGA; saw India offering substantial support to CARICOM countries.
- **USD 14 million Grant:** For community development projects.
- **USD 150 million Line of Credit** is offered specifically for solar energy and climate change projects.
- **Special Training Programs:** In response to the needs of CARICOM nations, India offered tailored capacity-building programs.
- **India-CARICOM Task Force:** It was established to reinvigorate cooperation by streamlining and enhancing ongoing initiatives and establishing clearer strategies for the future.

Importance of India – CARICOM relations

- **Strategic Expansion:** The Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region is diversifying its geopolitical ties, seeking new partnerships in Asia, which aligns with India's ambition to expand its presence in the region.
- **Shared Climate Concerns:** India and CARICOM face climate change impacts, including rising sea levels and extreme weather.
- India's COP-26 efforts align with CARICOM's call for climate finance for mitigation and adaptation.
- **International Solar Alliance (ISA):** The ISA, co-founded by India, offers a platform for CARICOM nations to enhance solar energy deployment.
- Additionally, the One World One Sun One Grid (OWOSOG) initiative is an innovative approach to creating a global grid that could transmit solar energy across continents.
- **Digital Health Collaboration:** India's digital health advancements, like CoWin and National Digital Health Mission (NDHM), offer a model for improving healthcare systems in CARICOM, especially for climate-induced health threats.
- **Biofuel and Energy Cooperation:** India's collaboration with Brazil in biofuel research could be extended to CARICOM nations, creating a platform for joint energy solutions and biofuel production.

- **Strengthened Partnerships:** India's Prime Minister's visit and India's ongoing development assistance programs, such as the USD 1 million contribution to the **CARICOM Development Fund**, lay a strong foundation for future collaborations.