



India-Cuba Relations

Why in News

The retirement of Raul Castro as the first secretary of Cuba's ruling Communist Party brings to an **end the six-decade-long rule of the "historic generation"**, who, under the leadership of Fidel Castro, captured power in 1959 through an armed revolution.

- Earlier in January 2021, the **US** State Department had **designated Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism** for repeatedly providing support for acts of international terrorism in granting safe harbour to terrorists.



Key Points

- **History of Cuba:**
 - From the 15th century, it was a **colony of Spain until the Spanish-American War of 1898**, when Cuba was occupied by the United States and gained nominal independence as

a de facto United States protectorate in 1902.

- In 1940, Cuba attempted to strengthen its democratic system, but mounting political radicalization and social strife culminated in a **coup and subsequent dictatorship under Fulgencio Batista in 1952.**
- Open corruption and oppression under Batista's rule led to his ousting in January 1959 by the 26th of July Movement, which afterwards established **communist rule under the leadership of Fidel Castro.**
- Since 1965, the state has been governed by the **Communist Party of Cuba.**
- **The country was a point of contention during the Cold War** between the Soviet Union and the United States, and a nuclear war nearly broke out during the **Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.**
- In 2019, a **new Constitution was approved** which officially recognizes the right to private property, while also reassuring the central government's authority over the regulation of production and land.

▪ **India-Cuba Relations:**

◦ **Political:**

- India was amongst the first countries to extend **recognition to Cuba after the 1959 Revolution.** Both countries have maintained close contacts with each other in various international fora, such as the [United Nations \(UN\)](#), [Non-Aligned Movement \(NAM\)](#), [World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#), etc.
- India has been supporting Cuba against US supported resolutions at the [UN Human Rights Council](#) and also consistently voted in favour of Cuban sponsored resolutions in the UN General Assembly calling for lifting of US sanctions against Cuba.
- Cuba **supports India's inclusion as a permanent member in the restructured [UN Security Council](#).**
 - Cuba also **voted in favour of India's candidature for Non-Permanent Seat in UNSC.**
- Cuba has also joined the [International Solar Alliance](#), an India-France initiative.

◦ **Economic:**

- Bilateral trade between India and Cuba stands at **USD 38.81 Million** (as of 2017).
- India and Cuba agreed to collaborate in the areas of [Biotechnology](#), [Homeopathy](#) and the [traditional system of medicine](#) during the visit of the President of India to Cuba in 2019.
- India provides development assistance to Cuba in various sectors, and **in January 2019 made a donation of 60 tractors** with accessories, medicines and medical equipment to the island.

◦ **Cultural:**

- In Cuba, Yoga and Vipassana meditation are practiced. Interest in [Ayurveda](#) and Indian Naturopathy is increasing.
- [Rabindranath Tagore's](#) birth anniversary is celebrated every year.
 - In May, 2007, a bust of Rabindranath Tagore donated by [the Indian Council for Cultural Relations \(ICCR\)](#) was unveiled in Old Havana.
 - There is a bust of Mahatma Gandhi and a statue of [Mother Teresa](#) in Havana.
- Cuba also celebrated [International Day of Yoga](#), [Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary](#) and 550th anniversary of [Guru Nanak Dev](#).

Way Forward

- Both Cuba and India have been united for many years and **there is common ground in their struggles to achieve a multi-polar world.** Both countries are great friends, however these **magnificent political ties must be developed more in the economic and commercial**

field.

[Source: IE](#)

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