

India Argentina Relations

India opened a Trade Commission in Buenos Aires in 1943 and later made it into an embassy in 1949. Argentina had established a consulate in Calcutta in the 1920s which was transferred to Delhi as an embassy in 1950. Argentina opened a Consulate General office in Mumbai in April, 2009.

VISITS FROM ARGENTINA

Latest

The latest is the visit of the Chief Minister of Buenos Aires Mr Mauricio Macri from 28-30 April 2010. He was the guest of Honour in the India-Latin America Business Conclave organized by CII. He visited Delhi and Mumbai and held meetings with Indian business groups. He had meetings with Minister of State (PK) for External Affairs and the Chief Ministers of Delhi and Maharashtra.

President Cristina Kirchner visited New Delhi on 14 October 2009. This was the first-ever high-level visit in the last fifteen years. She was accompanied by her Foreign Minister, Minister of Planning, Minister of Production, Minister of Science and Technology and Governors of the provinces of San Juan and La pampa. A 70-member business delegation also went with her. This was her first visit to an Asian Country. She met the Prime Minister and President of India as well as other dignitaries. Ten agreements for cooperation were signed.

Previous Visits

- Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana-September 2007 (for Doha WTO meeting)
- Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana – September 2007 (for G-20 meeting)
- Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana – July 2006
- President Carlos Menem – March 1994
- President Raul Alfonsin - 1985 (chief guest for the Republic Day)
- President Reynaldo Bignone - 1983 (to attend NAM summit)
- President Arturo Frondizi - Dec 1961

VISITS FROM INDIA

- Minister of State for External Affairs Smt Praneet Kaur - May 2010
- Minister of Textiles Mr Sankarsinh Vaghela - April 2008
- Minister of State for External Affairs Mr Anand Sharma - February 2008
- Minister of State for External Affairs Rao Inderjeet Singh -2005
- Prime Minister Narasimha Rao - 1995 (for G-15 Summit)
- President Zail Singh - April 1984
- Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi – 1968

BILATERAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED ON 14 OCTOBER 2009

1. Framework Agreement between India and Argentina on cooperation in the Peaceful uses of Outer space.
2. MOU between SEGEMAR of Argentine Republic and Geological Survey of India.

3. POC in S&T between Department of Science and Technology of the Republic of India and Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation of the Argentine Republic for 2009-11.
4. MOU between Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of the Republic of India and Sports Secretariat of the Argentine Republic on Sports Cooperation.
5. MOU on Cooperation in the field of Trade Promotion & Technology Transfer in International Trade between the Government of Argentine Republic and the Government of the Republic of India.
6. MOU between INTI, Republic of Argentina and National Research Development Council Corporation, New Delhi.
7. MOU between ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) and ENARSA.
8. Institutional Cooperation Agreement between the Argentine Council on Scientific and Technical Research [CONICET] and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.
9. Exchange of letter for 5 year multiple entry free business visas.
10. Agreement between the Government of Argentina and the Government of the Republic of India for cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy.

PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS

1. MoU for Cooperation in Agricultural Research and Education – July 2006
2. BIPPA Agreement – 1999.
3. MOU on Antarctic Cooperation – 1998.
4. Agreement for exemption of Visas for holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports – 1994.
5. MOU on Foreign Office Consultations – 1994.
6. Agreement for Grant of three years' Business visa – 1993.
7. Agreement on Technical and Scientific Cooperation – 1985.
8. Cultural Agreement – 1974
9. Agreement for waiver of fee for tourist and transit visas – 1968.

COOPERATION

The Joint Commission established since 1994 coordinates and reviews bilateral cooperation. The third meeting of the Joint Commission was held in New Delhi in July 2006, co-chaired by the Argentine Foreign Minister and MOS External Affairs from the Indian side. India gives five ITEC scholarships to Argentine candidates every year. Argentine diplomats attend the courses at the Foreign Service Training Institute of India from time to time. ISRO launched an Argentine nano-satellite, called as PehuenSat-I (weighing 6 kg) on board PSLV of India in January 2007 on a commercial basis.

Trade (US \$ million)

Year	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
India's exports	342	492	328	290	269	154	131
India's imports	876	836	1002	949	746	563	571

	Argentina	
	Jan-June 2010	Jan-June 2009
India's Exports	190	145
India's Imports	1100	470

Major exports of India in 2009 were Organic chemicals (US\$118m), Equipment and machinery (US\$20m), Synthetic fibre (US\$16m), Sound and image devices (US\$13m), Tractors and autoparts (US\$11m), Lubricants and special oils (US\$8m), Cotton (US\$3m), Dyes (US\$9m) and Iron & Steel (US\$4m).

Major Imports from Argentina in 2009 were Soybean oil (US\$ 510m), Sunflower oil (US\$ 53m), Sugar (US\$ 30m), Leather (US\$ 15m), Zinc (US\$ 8m), Iron and steel (US\$ 9m), Water pumps (US\$8m), Plastics (US\$ 4), Salt and related minerals (US\$ 4m) and Coal (US\$ 3m).

INVESTMENT AND JOINT VENTURES

There are 12 Indian Companies including TCS, Cognizant, CRISIL's IREVNA, Flatworld Solutions, HCL, Cellent, Aaliptha Software Company, United Phosphorus Ltd, Punjab Chemicals and Crop Protection Ltd, Glenmark, Godrej, Indo Borax Chemicals Ltd, etc which have established operations in Argentina. They provide employment to 1300 Argentines.

Argentine companies in India: **IMPISA**, the Argentine engineering company, specializing in hydroelectric projects and energy, has opened an office in Gurgaon. They are exploring opportunities for projects as well as supply of power generation equipments such as turbines. They source wind energy parts from India and outsource engineering designs to Indian Companies. **Biosidus**, an Argentine pharma company has a proposal to invest 20 million dollars in a new plant in India for production of biotech pharmaceuticals for Indian and Asian markets. They are already exporting over 3 million dollars a year to India. **BAGO**, the leading Argentine pharma company has an office in Hyderabad to source raw materials. They have a joint venture operation with Ranbaxy to market their products in Thailand. Some Argentine companies have shown interest in investment and joint ventures in India in food processing, autoparts and other sectors.

CULTURE

Argentines have admiration for Indian culture, philosophy and spiritualism. There are thousands of followers of Sai Baba, Brahmakumari, Art of Living, Rama Krishna Mission, Hare Krishna and other such groups. Yoga is very popular. There are hundreds of Yoga centres all over the country. There are some Argentines who perform and teach Indian dance and music. Myrta Barvie is a well-known dancer of Bharatanatyam, Odissi and Kuchipudi. She was trained in Kalakshetra for five years.

An Argentine Tabla player has been given ICCR scholarship for training in India in 2009. Bollywood dancing is becoming popular.

Festival of India: The Embassy has started organizing Festivals of India since 2008. The first Festival was held in November 2008 and the second in November 2009. The third is scheduled for 4-14 November 2010. The Festival includes handicrafts exhibition, live demonstration of handicrafts, classical and folk dance performances, Film Festivals, seminars, literary contest, Food Festival, photo exhibition and Incredible India tourism promotion. The second Festival attracted over 50,000 visitors.

Literature: Rabindra Nath Tagore had visited Argentina in 1924 and stayed for two months as the guest of Victoria Ocampo, a well-known literary personality and writer. He wrote a series of poems under the title "Purabi" containing memory of his stay in Argentina. Victoria Ocampo was given a honorary doctorate by the Viswa Bharati University and this was handed over by PM Mrs Indira Gandhi during her visit to Argentina in 1968. Jawaharlal Nehru University had organised a seminar on Victoria Ocampo in 1991. Maria Rene Cura, the Argentine writer (died in 2007) and associate of Victoria Ocampo had published for some years a magazine on India. She ran a cultural centre devoted to India called as "Anand Bhavan".

Films: Pablo Cesar, the Argentine movie director has directed a Indo- Argentine joint production film "Unicorn- the garden of fruits" . This was released in 1996. He is now working on co-production of a film " Thinking of him" based on the interaction between Tagore and Ocampo. The Embassy has put him in touch with Indian film directors and producers. The script-writer of this movie Mr. Jeronimo Toubes visited India along with the Presidential Delegation and met various producers and Directors who have shown interest.

Trivandrum based "Toonz Animation India" and Illusion Studios of Argentina have tied up for co- coproduction of a animation film "El Gaturro". It is based on a famous Argentine cartoon character "Gaturro". The Film, costing 5 million dollars is a 50 : 50 Joint Venture.

Ayurveda: Ayurveda is becoming popular and there are some Ayurvedic Spas and massage centres in Argentina. The University of Buenos Aires and the University of Cordoba are running courses in Ayurveda. University of Cordoba recently started a two year post graduate course in Ayurveda from April 2010. Dr Jorge Luis Berra is the organiser of these courses. Our Honorary Consul General in Cordoba city Dr. Sergio Suraz is a well-known Ayurvedic expert. The Department of AYUSH of the Indian Health Ministry has agreed to the proposal of the Embassy to support promotion of Ayurveda in Argentina.

Education: Jawaharlal Nehru University has signed an MoU for Cooperation with San Luis University of Argentina. Other Argentine universities have shown interest in collaboration with Indian universities.

Thinktanks: The Indian Council for World Affairs has signed a MoU (April 2009) with the Argentine Council for International Relations. More Argentine think tanks have shown interest in exchanges with their Indian counterparts.

Economics: Raul Prebisch, the renowned Argentine economist was conferred Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding in 1974. Argentine economists have participated in conferences organized by Indian think tanks such as ICRIER. Indian economists such as Rakesh Mohan and Rajiv Kumar have participated in seminars in Argentina.

CONSULAR RELATIONS

Under the 1968 Visa agreement, fees for transit and tourist visas have been abolished. Under the new visa agreement signed during Argentine Presidential visit in October 2009, it has been agreed that five year multi-entry business visas would be given free of cost. **The Embassy of India in Buenos Aires gives Cafe Con Visa** (coffee with visa) to Argentine visitors. The applicants are invited for coffee and visa is given immediately. This has been praised by the Argentine media, public and the Foreign Minister himself.

INDIAN COMMUNITY

There are about 100 Indians in Buenos Aires of which half are those settled for over thirty years. Most of these are from the Sindhi community. Others are professionals working with Indian companies and multinational corporations.

About 300 Sikhs from Punjab have settled down in Salta province in the course of the early and mid twentieth century. They have become Argentine citizens and are well assimilated in the local population. Most of them are in retail and wholesale trade. The first generation immigrants speak Punjabi. There is a Gurudwara in the town Rosario de la Frontera, where they celebrate Guru Nanak Day every year. President Zail Singh had visited the Gurudwara in 1984.

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