



India-Cuba Relations

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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