



Barbados: World's Newest Republic

Why in News

Recently, Barbados has officially removed **Queen Elizabeth II** as its head of state and become the **world's newest republic** nearly 400 years after the country became a British colony.

- The [Caribbean island nation](#), 55 years after its independence, got rid of the remnants of colonial rule by separating from Britain.
- Barbados, however, will continue to be one of the 54 [Commonwealth nations](#).

Key Points

▪ About:

◦ Barbados:

- **Location:** It is a small island country in the **south-eastern Caribbean Sea**. 
- **Neighbours:** Its neighbours include Saint Lucia, to the north, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, to the west, and Trinidad and Tobago to the south.
- **Capital:** Bridgetown
- **Independence:** On November 30, 1966, Barbados gained its independence.
- **Leadership:**
 - **Dame Sandra Prunella Mason** is the current President of Barbados.
 - **Mia Amor Mottley** is the current Prime Minister of Barbados.
- **Part of CARICOM:** Barbados is part of [Caribbean Community \(CARICOM\)](#) which was formed in 1973.

◦ History of Barbados:

- Barbados **first became an English colony in 1625**. It was a **part of the British Empire for over 400 years**, a link in the lines of trade, commerce and oppression that English mercantilism and colonialism fostered for centuries.
- **Slaves, indentured labour, a lack of democracy** — the Caribbean was home to some of the most institutionalised and invisibilised horrors in history.

▪ India and Barbados Relations:

- **Shared Platforms:** India and Barbados enjoy close and cordial relations and interact actively in the [United Nations \(UN\)](#), [Commonwealth](#) and [Non-Aligned Movement \(NAM\)](#) and other international fora.
 - Barbados is also a signatory to [International Solar Alliance](#) and has ratified it in January, 2021
- **Air Services Agreement:** India and Barbados have **signed the Air Services Agreement in 2015**, for facilitation of travel arrangements for the citizens and the possibility of direct air connectivity and chartered flight operations between the two countries.

- The first ever **Foreign Office Consultations (FOC)** between India and Barbados was held in Bridgetown, Barbados in 2015.
- **UNSC Reform:** Barbados supported the G-4 resolution on expanding the UN Security Council in 2007.
 - The country also **voted for India's candidature for Non-Permanent seat** on the UN Security Council in 2011-12, and supports India's candidature for a permanent seat on the Security Council.
- **Bilateral Trade:**
 - **Export (USD 12.76 million 2019-20):** Indian exports include vehicles, pharmaceuticals, textiles, iron & steel, organic chemicals, etc.
 - **Import (USD 1.48 million 2019-20):** Indian imports include electrical machinery, optical photography, cinematographic equipment.
- **Sports and Culture:**
 - Cricket being a great connection in India, Barbadian cricketers of yore and modern times are household names among Indian sport lovers.
 - Many Barbadian cricketers are members of Indian Premier League teams.
- **Indian Community:**
 - Approximately 2500 people of Indian origin have settled in Barbados and most of them have since acquired local nationality.

Commonwealth of Nations

- It is an international intergovernmental organization of countries that were **mostly former territories of the British Empire and dependencies.**
- It was established by the **London Declaration** in 1949.
- **Queen Elizabeth II** is the head of the Commonwealth.
- The current membership includes 54 Countries. The membership is based on **free and equal voluntary co-operation.**
 - It is home to 2.5 billion people, and includes both advanced economies and developing countries.
- The last country to join the Commonwealth was **Rwanda** in 2009.
- The **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting** is a **biennial summit** meeting of the heads of government from all Commonwealth nations.

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