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1. India-Venezuela Relations – International Relation

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Acting President of Venezuela Delcy Rodriguez discussed long-term energy partnerships, critical minerals cooperation, and expanding India-Venezuela strategic engagement in June 2026. The meeting marks a renewed phase in bilateral relations – Venezuela possesses the world's largest proven oil reserves (~303 billion barrels) while India imports over 85% of its crude requirements, making the partnership strategically significant for India's energy security. Both countries celebrated 66 years of diplomatic relations in 2025, cooperating across energy, pharmaceuticals, critical minerals, and multilateral forums including NAM, Voice of Global South Summit, and BRICS expansion discussions.

1. Key Highlights of India-Venezuela Meeting

Long-Term Energy Partnership

1. Explored shifting from spot purchases to long-term crude oil supply contracts
2. Enhancing India's energy security through supply predictability
3. Ensuring stable Venezuelan export revenues

Cooperation in Critical Minerals

1. Strengthening collaboration in exploration, mining, processing, supply-chain diversification
2. Supporting clean energy transitions (EVs, renewable energy manufacturing)
3. Venezuela rich in bauxite, gold, coltan (tantalum-niobium), iron ore, rare earth elements

Expansion of Oil Sector Investments

1. Greater participation of Indian companies in Venezuela's upstream and downstream oil sectors
2. As Venezuela undertakes major energy-sector reforms
3. ONGC Videsh potential expanded role

Strengthening Pharmaceutical Cooperation

1. Expanding access to affordable Indian generic medicines
2. Following MoU recognizing Indian Pharmacopoeia (March 2026)
3. Venezuela gaining affordable healthcare access; India expanding pharma export markets

Technical Delegation and Business Engagement

1. India sending technical team to Venezuela
2. Identifying opportunities in – Energy, mining, transportation, agriculture, industrial cooperation

2. About India-Venezuela Relations

Historical and Diplomatic Partnership

1. Cordial relations based on common positions on major international political, economic issues
2. 66 years of diplomatic relations (celebrated 2025)
3. Resident embassies in New Delhi and Caracas for over four decades

Political and Multilateral Cooperation

1. Cooperation in –
 1. Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)
 2. Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS)
 3. BRICS expansion discussions
2. High-level exchanges intensified under Acting President Delcy Rodriguez

Energy and Hydrocarbon Cooperation

1. Energy remains cornerstone of bilateral relations
2. Venezuela - World's largest proven oil reserves (~303 billion barrels)
3. India - Among fastest-growing energy consumers importing over 85% crude requirements
4. Cooperation includes - Crude oil trade, refinery partnerships, upstream investments through ONGC Videsh

Economic and Trade Relations

1. Bilateral trade - ~USD 679 million (FY 2025-26)
2. India's exports - Pharmaceuticals, cotton, machinery, refined petroleum products
3. India's imports - Crude oil, mineral fuels, aluminium, iron products
4. Trade deficit favouring Venezuela due to crude oil imports

Cultural and Development Cooperation

1. India promotes - Ayurveda, Yoga, scholarships, capacity-building in Venezuela
2. Through -
 1. ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme)
 2. Atal Bihari Vajpayee Scholarship Scheme
 3. India-UNDP Development Partnership Fund

3. Significance of India-Venezuela Engagement

Enhancing India's Energy Security

1. Diversifying crude oil sources amid geopolitical uncertainties
2. Reducing excessive dependence on traditional suppliers (Middle East, Russia)
3. Venezuela offering alternative Atlantic Basin supply route outside Strait of Hormuz vulnerability
4. Long-term contracts providing price stability, supply predictability

Securing Access to Critical Minerals

1. Cooperation strengthening India's clean energy ambitions
2. Supporting electric vehicle ecosystem (coltan for batteries, bauxite for aluminium)
3. Manufacturing resilience under strategic mineral security initiatives
4. Reducing China dependence in critical mineral supply chains

Strengthening India's Global South Outreach

1. Reinforces India's leadership among Global South nations
2. Deepens partnerships with Latin American countries on trade, development, multilateral governance
3. Venezuela as strategic partner in South America alongside traditional partners (Brazil, Argentina)

Expanding Economic Opportunities

1. Venezuela's ongoing energy, economic reforms creating new opportunities for Indian firms
2. Sectors - Hydrocarbons, pharmaceuticals, mining, agriculture, infrastructure development
3. Indian expertise in IT, pharmaceuticals, agriculture technology applicable to Venezuelan needs

India's Latin America Strategy

1. Venezuela engagement part of broader India-Latin America outreach
2. Region rich in critical minerals (lithium triangle - Argentina-Bolivia-Chile; copper, rare earths)
3. Countering China's dominant economic presence in Latin America
4. India-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) engagement deepening

4. Challenges in India-Venezuela Relations

1. **US Sanctions** - American sanctions on Venezuela complicating Indian companies' investment, payment transactions

2. **Political Instability** – Venezuela's internal political challenges (contested elections, opposition movement) creating investment uncertainty
3. **Low Bilateral Trade** – USD 679 million modest given potential; reflecting sanctions, Venezuela's economic crisis
4. **Payment Mechanisms** – Dollar-denominated transactions complicated by sanctions; need for rupee-bolivar settlement mechanism

5. Way Forward

1. Finalize long-term crude oil supply contracts providing stability for both sides
2. Develop rupee-bolivar payment mechanism bypassing dollar sanctions complications
3. Fast-track ONGC Videsh upstream investments in Venezuelan oil blocks
4. Establish critical minerals joint venture for exploration, processing
5. Expand ITEC capacity-building programs strengthening people-to-people ties
6. Leverage India-CELAC platform for broader Latin American engagement

Conclusion

India-Venezuela renewed engagement driven by energy security (world's largest proven reserves meeting India's 85% crude import dependence), critical minerals cooperation, pharmaceutical access, and Global South solidarity marks strategic diversification of India's energy and mineral supply chains beyond traditional Gulf-Russia dependence.

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