



**Ambassador's Speech on the occasion of Arrival Day at Baba Mai Plein
[Paramaribo 5 June 2026]**

Namaskar... Good afternoon,

Hon'ble President, Her Excellency Dr. **Jennifer Geerling-Simons**, the Chair of the National Assembly of Suriname, Members of the Cabinet, Parliamentarians, Government officials, media personnels, distinguished members of Indian diaspora, friends and colleagues.

It is indeed my privilege to be part of this blissful celebration of Indian Arrival Day at the Baba- Mai Plein. On behalf of my Embassy and the people of India, I extend my heartfelt greetings to the Indian diaspora in Suriname on the 153rd Arrival and Immigration Day. This historic day marks the moment when our ancestors set foot on the banks of the Suriname River in 1873 by anchoring Lallarookh, bringing with them the cultural spirit of India. In the steps of Baba and Mai brought the value of coexistence, harmony and diversity, the philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumkam' which was always a guiding principle for Indian culture. Their offsprings infused the best of India, be it in field of music, performing art, rituals or language in Suriname. Baithak Gana, Ramleela performance and numerous art forms not only preserved by our Surinamese brother and sisters but also, they enriched the flavor and dimensions of these arts. They also carried with them the philosophy of Labor Omnia Vincit—that means, "Hard work conquers all." Since then, the Indian diaspora has been an integral part of Suriname's development journey.

India and Suriname enjoy time-tested relations founded on mutual respect, trust, and civilizational connections. Since 1976, our nations have nurtured a unique affinity, strengthened by a shared history and a vibrant diaspora that serves as a living bridge between our cultures, reinforcing the values of cooperation and solidarity.

Over the decades, our partnership has witnessed a steady upward trajectory, marked by regular high-level exchanges and expanding collaboration across diverse sectors. The last visit of the External Affairs Minister of India was a remarkable. These include strengthening opportunities for MSMEs and promoting sustainable growth, joint initiatives to enhance public health systems, food security and agricultural productivity, capacity building and human resource development through ITEC training programs, skill development and knowledge exchange, as well as Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) delivering

grassroots benefits to communities in Suriname. As a member of the Global South and a valued CARICOM partner, Suriname remains a key partner for India on the international stage.

The Hindustani community, deeply woven into the Surinamese fabric, continues to enrich the nation's diversity by keeping their traditions and culture alive. With this rich cultural heritage and ongoing economic development, the deep bonds of the diaspora strengthen our social, cultural, and economic ties, laying the groundwork for further cooperation and mutual growth. Our diaspora creates a special bridge between our two societies.

Today, we observe also world environment day. On this occasion, I am privileged to stand in the land that has more than 93 % forest cover.

Naanaa-Viiryaa Ossadhiiryaa Bibharti Prthivii Nah Prathataam Raadhyataam Nah

It means the mother earth gives birth to many plants and various medicinal herbs of various capacities; She enriches us and makes us healthy. Let's resolve to keep our environment sustainable so that our future generation needs may keep intact.

Allow me to conclude with a peace mantra:

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः

May all be happy; may all be free from illness.

Jai Hind... Jai Bharat... Jai Suriname.



Ambassador's Speech on the occasion of Arrival Day [Paramaribo 5 June 2026]

Namaskar and Good afternoon.

Hon'ble President, Her Excellency Dr. Jennifer Geerling-Simons; the Chair of the National Assembly of Suriname; esteemed Members of the Cabinet and Parliamentarians; government officials; media personnel; distinguished members of the Indian diaspora; and dear friends and colleagues.

It is indeed my privilege to stand before you today at the Baba-Mai Plein for this blissful celebration. On behalf of the Embassy and the people of India, I extend my heartfelt greetings to the Indian diaspora in Suriname as we commemorate the 153rd Indian Arrival and Immigration Day.

The Living Bridge: Honoring Our Ancestors

This historic day marks the precise moment in 1873 when our ancestors first set foot on the banks of the Suriname River, steps away from where the *Lallarookh* anchored. They arrived carrying very little in their hands, but they carried an immense wealth in their hearts: the timeless cultural spirit of India. In the footsteps of Baba and Mai came the profound

values of coexistence, harmony, and diversity, encapsulated in our guiding philosophy:

'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' — *The World is One Family.*

Over the generations, their descendants have beautifully infused the best of Indian heritage into the vibrant fabric of Suriname. Be it through the soul-stirring rhythms of *Baithak Gana*, the dramatic storytelling of *Ramleela*, or the preservation of ancient rituals and languages, our Surinamese brothers and sisters have not merely preserved these traditions—they have enriched them, giving them new dimensions.

Our ancestors also carried with them an unwavering work ethic, living by the truth of *Labor Omnia Vincit* "**Hard work conquers all.**" Since that historic landing, the Indian diaspora has been an irreplaceable pillar in Suriname's nation-building and development journey.

A Time-Tested Partnership

India and Suriname enjoy a time-tested relationship founded on mutual respect, deep trust, and civilizational connections. Since establishing formal diplomatic ties in 1976, our nations have nurtured a unique affinity, strengthened by a shared history and a vibrant diaspora that serves as a living, breathing bridge between our cultures.

Over the decades, our bilateral partnership has witnessed a steady upward trajectory, marked by regular high-level exchanges and expanding collaboration. A recent testament to this was the highly successful visit of the External Affairs Minister of India.

Today, our cooperation spans vital sectors aimed at sustainable growth, including:

- Strengthening opportunities for MSMEs.
- Joint initiatives to enhance healthcare systems, food security, and agricultural productivity.
- Fostering human resource development through ITEC training programs and skill-development exchanges.
- Implementing Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) that deliver tangible benefits directly to local communities.

As an essential voice in the Global South and a valued CARICOM partner, Suriname remains a crucial ally for India on the international stage.

A Shared Responsibility for Our Planet

Remarkably, today we also observe **World Environment Day** standing in a nation that has unmatched **93% forest cover**.

This alignment of cultural heritage and environmental stewardship brings to mind an verse from the Bhumi Sukta of Atharva Veda:

Naanaa-Viiryaa Ossadhiiryaa Bibharti

Prthivii Nah Prathataam Raadhyataam Nah

This reminds us that Mother Earth nurtures countless plants and medicinal herbs of diverse powers; She enriches us and keeps us whole. Today, let us collectively resolve to protect our environment and pursue sustainable development, ensuring that the inheritance of our future generations remains intact.

Conclusion

As the Hindustani community continues to weave its rich threads into the beautiful multicultural tapestry of Suriname, let us look forward to a future of even greater cooperation, mutual growth, and deep friendship.

Allow me to conclude with a timeless prayer for global peace and well-being:

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः

May all be happy; may all be free from illness.

Jai Hind. Jai Bharat. Jai Suriname.