

**1. India Strengthens Diaspora Ties in Trinidad and Tobago****Modi Celebrates Indian Diaspora as “Pride of India”**

During a landmark visit to Trinidad and Tobago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the 35 million-strong Indian diaspora worldwide as India's "pride". At an event in Port of Spain, he said, "Each one of you is a Rashtradoot — an ambassador of India's values, culture, and heritage."



**PM Modi: India Building Full Database of Girmitya Community**

He announced that sixth-generation Indian-origin citizens in Trinidad and Tobago will now be eligible for Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards. This move coincides with the 180th anniversary of the arrival of the first Indian indentured labourers (Girmityas) in the Caribbean nation.

**Strengthening Girmitya Connections**

Modi emphasized the deep cultural links between India and the Girmitya community — descendants of indentured labourers from India who settled in Trinidad, Fiji, Mauritius, and parts of Africa. Many of these migrants came from Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh, bringing with them languages like Bhojपुरi.

India is building a comprehensive database to map the migration history of these communities. The effort includes identifying ancestral Indian villages, preserving Girmitya heritage, and organizing World Girmitya Conferences.

**Financial and Digital Collaborations**

Trinidad and Tobago has become the first Caribbean nation to adopt India's UPI (Unified Payments Interface) system, enabling easier financial transactions. India also signed at least six agreements with the country, covering areas such as:

- Financial and pharmaceutical cooperation
- Membership in India-led global initiatives like the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA)
- Quick Impact Projects (QIPs): Small developmental projects (under \$50,000 each) funded by Indian grants
- Educational support: 2,000 laptops gifted to local students to aid in digitising education

Additionally, India has donated \$1 million worth of agro-machinery to support agriculture, including millet farming and seaweed-based fertilisers.

**Honouring Indian Heritage in Trinidad**

Modi paid tribute to iconic Indian-origin figures in Trinidad and Tobago, including:

- Dr. Rudranath Capildeo, mathematician and politician
- Sundar Popo, known as the “King of Chutney” music
- Daren Ganga, former West Indies cricketer
- Sewdass Sadhu, the builder of the iconic “Temple in the Sea”

Sadhu, an indentured labourer, was imprisoned for building a temple on private land. Undeterred, he spent 25 years building a new temple in the sea, using his bicycle to transport materials. The temple, now known as the Sewdass Sadhu Shiva Mandir, is a prominent Hindu pilgrimage site and symbol of determination.

### **The Larger Context**

People of Indian origin make up nearly 40% of Trinidad and Tobago's population, with strong Hindu, Muslim, and other Indian-rooted cultural traditions. Their arrival in 1845 laid the foundation for a vibrant Indo-Caribbean heritage.

With these new initiatives, Modi’s visit marked a significant step in reconnecting India with its diaspora and reaffirming the shared cultural and historical bonds that span generations.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Relations

Source: Indian Express

## **2. PM Modi’s Argentina Visit: Strengthening Ties After 57 Years**

### **Historic Bilateral Visit**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Buenos Aires on July 4, 2025 — the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Argentina in 57 years, since Indira Gandhi in 1968. He was warmly welcomed by President Javier Milei at Casa Rosada, Argentina’s presidential palace.



Modi paid tribute at the statue of General José de San Martín, a national hero of Argentina, Peru, and Chile. The visit is part of his five-nation “Global South” tour and aims to deepen cooperation across several sectors.

### **Key Areas of India-Argentina Cooperation**

India and Argentina celebrated 75 years of diplomatic relations in 2024. Both countries are now expanding partnerships in:

- Defence and security
- Agriculture and food processing
- Mining (especially lithium)
- Oil and gas
- Renewable energy
- Trade and investment

Argentina’s lithium reserves are especially important for India’s green energy transition. In 2024, India was Argentina’s fifth-largest trading partner.

## Three Lesser-Known Facts About India-Argentina Relations

### 1. Indira Gandhi's 1968 South America Tour

Indira Gandhi was the last Indian Prime Minister to visit Argentina in 1968. During her visit, she met writer Victoria Ocampo and conferred on her an honorary degree from Visva Bharati University, founded by Rabindranath Tagore.

Her month-long tour included visits to Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago, reflecting India's early outreach to Latin America.

### 2. First Argentine Visit to India in 1848

In 1848, Lucio V. Mansilla, a 17-year-old Argentine traveler, visited India. His writings, published in *Diario de viaje a Oriente*, offer early impressions of India — though shaped by colonial stereotypes. His travel account is one of the earliest cultural links between the two nations.

### 3. Tagore's Life-Changing Visit to Argentina

In 1924, Rabindranath Tagore visited Argentina while en route to Peru. Falling ill upon arrival, he stayed at the home of Victoria Ocampo, a renowned Argentine writer and publisher.

- During his stay, Tagore wrote the poetry collection *Purabi*, dedicated to Ocampo (whom he called Bijoya).
- Their bond helped popularise Indian philosophy, art, and culture in South America.
- Ocampo later promoted Tagore's work, translated his writings, and modeled her magazine *Sur* after Tagore's *Vishva Quarterly* to promote global cultural exchange.

## Conclusion

PM Modi's visit marks a renewed chapter in India-Argentina relations, building upon a rich, though lesser-known, history of cultural, intellectual, and diplomatic ties. With growing cooperation in trade, green energy, and people-to-people connections, the relationship is set to deepen in the coming years.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Science & Technology

Source: Indian Express

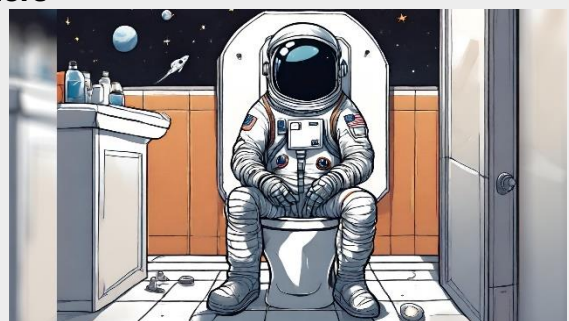
## 3. How Astronauts Eat and Use the Toilet in Space

### Meals in Space: Not Just Paste in Tubes Anymore

Astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS) enjoy nutritious and often tasty meals, though eating in space needs careful planning due to zero gravity.

### What Do They Eat?

- Packaged and dehydrated food: Meals are sealed in special pouches. Hot water is injected into them before eating.
- Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla shared Indian sweets like gajar ka halwa, moong dal halwa, and aamras with fellow astronauts — all pre-packed by ISRO and DRDO.



- Drinks like tea, coffee, and juice come in powder form and are mixed with water onboard.

### **How Do They Eat?**

#### **Zero gravity makes food float, so:**

- Food trays and cutlery are fastened with Velcro.
- Astronauts secure themselves using footholds.
- Packages are only slightly opened; spoons are dipped in to avoid food floating away.
- Salt and pepper are in liquid form and added with droppers.

### **Food Hygiene and Cleaning**

- Utensils are wiped clean with cloths — no running water is used.
- Waste food packets go into sealed waste containers.

### **Menu Selection**

- Astronauts pick their meals months in advance.
- Nutritionists ensure balanced meals: more calcium, less sodium, and enough vitamin D to keep bones healthy.

### **Why Scientists Want to Grow Food in Space**

As space missions become longer, it's not practical to carry all the food from Earth. That's why scientists are trying to grow food in space.

### **Current Research**

- Studying how plants grow in microgravity.
- Using LED lights for photosynthesis.
- Exploring soilless farming methods like hydroponics.

### **Crops Being Studied**

- Potatoes, soybeans, wheat, spinach, tomatoes, carrots
- Microalgae is being tested — it can be used as food, fuel, or even for oxygen generation.

ISRO is conducting multiple such experiments during Shukla's ISS stay, testing six crop varieties and microalgae.

### **How Astronauts Use the Toilet in Space**

#### **Peeing in Space**

- Urination is done using a suction hose, designed for both men and women.
- The urine is purified and recycled into drinking water — saving space and weight during space travel.

#### **Pooping in Space**

- Special suction-based toilets are used.
- Astronauts strap themselves to the seat to stay in place.
- Waste is collected in containers:
  - Most of it is burnt when returning spacecraft enter Earth's atmosphere.
  - Some samples are returned to Earth for health monitoring.

### **In Summary**

Life in space isn't just about floating in zero gravity — even simple things like eating or using the toilet involve clever technology and careful planning. As missions grow longer, especially with future Moon or Mars exploration in mind, growing food in space and managing waste efficiently will be crucial for human survival beyond Earth.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Science & Technology

Source: Indian Express

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