

India – Bolivia Relations

Political Relations

India and Bolivia enjoy friendly and cordial relations. The Indian Embassy in Lima is concurrently accredited to Bolivia since April 1981. Bolivia opened a resident Mission in New Delhi in 2012. Bolivia's first Ambassador to India, Jorge Cardenas Robles, presented his credentials to Rashtrapati on 8 November 2012. There are two Honorary Consuls General of India in Bolivia – in La Paz and Santa Cruz (not currently functional).

VIP visits – Bilateral Ministerial contacts have largely been on the sidelines of meetings of international organizations. MOS (C&I) met Bolivian Vice President in May 2000 on the margins of the Mercosur Economic Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Bolivian Vice-Foreign Minister Pablo Guzman visited New Delhi in September 2009 to participate in the Informal Meeting on the Doha Round of Negotiations and met the Indian C&I Minister. Bolivia's Minister for Development Planning, Mr. Rene Orellana paid a three day visit to New Delhi during March-April 2016 and met with Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. V.K. Singh and Minister for Railways Shri Suresh Prabhu and attended a business seminar 'Doing Business with India' organised by CII. Defence Minister of Bolivia, Mr. Reymi Ferreira visited Goa from 28 to 30 March 2016 to participate DEFEXPO 2016 at the invitation of the Defence Minister Shri Manohar Parrikar. In June 2016, Joint Secretary (LAC) visited Bolivia for bilateral consultations and held meetings with the Foreign Ministry, Minister of Development Planning, Minister of Public Works and Minister of Health. He also called on President Evo Morales.

The first India-Bolivia Foreign Office Consultations were held in La Paz on 20 November 2014. The Indian side was led by Shri R. Swaminathan, Special Secretary (AMS & CPV). The Bolivian side was led by Mr. Juan Carlos Alurralde, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs. Special Secretary also called on Mr. David Choquehuanca, Foreign Minister of Bolivia.

In 1997, India and Bolivia signed a Cultural Agreement. India has proposed the signing of BIPPA (Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement). Bolivia has proposed the signing of a Framework Agreement for Bilateral Cooperation and an Agreement on Visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders. Negotiations are ongoing. Efforts are on to establish an India-Bolivia Centre of Excellence in Information and Communication Technology at Cochabamba.

Assistance to Bolivia: Bolivia has been allocated 5 slots in 2016-17 for civilian training under ITEC. Some Bolivian diplomats have attended PCFD courses.

The lighting of the Archaeological Complex of Tiwanaku on the shores of Lake Titicaca, undertaken with Indian assistance, was inaugurated on June 21, 2017. Another project for the solar lighting of Plazuela del Niño (Children's Park) in Sucre is also being undertaken with Indian assistance.

India has extended humanitarian assistance to Bolivia. In 2011, India gave a cash contribution of US \$ 200,000 to Bolivia as a relief measure in the wake of floods in the North and Central regions. Similarly, in 2008, US \$ 100,000 was donated as cash assistance in response to the floods caused by the La Niña phenomenon. In 2007, India had donated medicines worth US\$ 200,000 as humanitarian aid in the wake of landslides in Bolivia.

Commercial Relations

Indo-Bolivian Trade (US \$ Million)

	2014-15	2015-16	Growth	2016-17	Growth	2017-18	Growth
India's Exports	70.838	74.432	5.07%	79.937	7.40%	12.39	-84.50%
India's imports	3.56	240.252	6648.65%	173.542	-27.77%	134.065	-22.75%
Total Trade	74.398	314.684	322.97%	253.479	-19.45%	146.455	-42.22%

Source: DGCI&S, Department of Commerce, Government of India

However, according to Institute of Statistic of Bolivia (INEI), trade between India and Bolivia during the calendar year 2015 (January to December) was US\$ 315.249 million – exports from India to Bolivia were US \$118.893 million and imports by India from Bolivia valued at US \$196.356 million. During the same period in 2016, according to INEI statistics, the total trade was US \$ 228.791 million - exports from India to Bolivia valued at US \$106.642 million (a decline of 10.3%) while imports by India from Bolivia valued at US \$122.149 million (a decline of 37.79%). During the first four months of 2017 (January to April), the total trade as per INEI figures is valued at US \$ 200.475 million (Indian exports at US \$38.798 million; Imports by India from Bolivia at US \$161.677 million).

India mainly exports automobiles, iron and steel, pharmaceuticals, machinery, rubber and plastic products and yarns and textiles. It imports gold, leather, fertilizers and animal feed from Bolivia.

Investments: The only Indian project in Bolivia so far, by Jindal Steel & Power Ltd. to develop the El Mutun iron ore mine and set up a steel plant was terminated by the Indian company in July 2012 due to differences with the Bolivian government. Final negotiations are on between the company and the Government of Bolivia to bring the matter to a closure. Pesticides company UPL has an office in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Tata Motors has appointed a dealer in Bolivia. Similarly, Ashok Leyland has an accord with COFADENA to develop its business in the country.

Cultural Relations

India and Bolivia have signed a cultural agreement. ICCR sponsored the visit of Odissi dancer Masako Ono to Bolivia in May 2012. Masako Ono gave

three dance performances, one each in La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. Bolivians participated actively in commemorating the International Day of Yoga in 2015 and in 2016. In 2017, the International Day of Yoga was held in Lake Titicaca, La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. Discussions are on for renewal of the Cultural Exchange Programme. Bolivian cultural group *Dil Deewana* is active in promoting Indian culture and Cinema.

Indian community

The Indian community in Bolivia is small, and consists of around 100 Indians engaged in retail trade, transportation sector, agriculture, religious communities, etc.

Useful Resources:

Website: www.indembassy.org.pe;

Facebook: [India in Peru & Bolivia](#) ; [Centro Cultural India](#), [Becarios del ITEC](#)

Twitter: [@eoilima](#) and [@CCultural India](#)

You Tube: [India in Peru & Bolivia](#)

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