

**High Commission of India**  
**Suva**  
\*\*\*

**India-Cook Islands Bilateral Relations**

India and the Cook Islands established diplomatic relations in 1998. Formerly, Indian High Commissioner at Wellington was concurrently accredited to the Cook Islands. Since the reopening of the High Commission of India in Suva in 1999, High Commissioner in Suva is concurrently accredited to the Cook Islands.

Government of India had offered financial assistance worth approx. US\$ 50,000 to the Government of the Cook Islands in 2005 for executing small projects. India offered a grant aid of US\$ 100,000 each annually to all small Pacific States at the Post Forum Dialogue Partners meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum in Nadi (Fiji) in October 2006 for programmes and for sustainable development which was increased to US\$ 125,000 in 2009. From this grant about US\$ 60,000 was given in 2010 to the Cook Islands for projects including furniture and equipment for educational institutions, up-gradation of fishing tools for villagers, construction of public utilities, etc. India has provided US\$ 94,347.65 for purchase of Audit Software for the Audit office; supply of computers and accessories for Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Immigration and for Ministry of Finance & Economic Management of Cook Islands.

Two experts from Cook Islands attended the workshop on Sustainable Development organized by this Mission for all the 14 Pacific Island Countries in Suva in March 2007 in association with TERI.

A specialized vehicle for disabled persons has been procured by Cook Islands against the Indian Grant-in-Aid in August 2012.

India provided funds in February 2013 for 16 community development projects, in February 2014 for equipments for Cricket Tournament, and in January 2015 for 10 Project Proposals, under the Grant-in- Aid.

Cook Islands was allotted two slots for ITEC trainings for the first time in 2010. Allotment was increased to four slots for 2015-16. For the year 2017-18, 2 slots have been offered to Cook Islands.

Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed [ MOS(EA) ] led the Indian delegation for the 24<sup>th</sup> Post Forum Dialogue Partners Meeting held in the Cook Islands on 31 August 2012. MOS(EA) interacted with other leaders of delegations and participants of the meeting. He met with the Health Minister of the Cook Islands and reiterated our interest in developing closer relations with the Cook Islands and the Pacific region.

Mr. Mark Brown, Minister for Finance, visited India on 2-4 February 2013 for the ADB Asia Leadership Program on Sustainable Development and Climate Change held in Delhi.

High Commissioner attended the Third Round Table Meeting of Development Partners in Rarotonga on 12 February 2013.

Mr. John Henry, Associate Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs visited India in connection with the Second High Level Meeting (HLM) on South-South Cooperation for Child Rights in Asia and the Pacific, held in New Delhi on 23-25 October, 2013.

Development Partners Meeting (DPM) was held on 10-14 February 2014 in the Cook Islands (CI), as a forum “for dialogue between government, civil society, private sector, and international development partners on aid effectiveness.” High Commission of India, Suva participated in the meeting.

**FIPIC-I:** Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hosted the First Summit Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC-I) in Suva (Fiji) during the visit on 19 November 2014 with the participation of 14 Pacific countries. Cook Islands delegation, led by the Prime Minister Hon. Henry Puna, attended the Summit. The announcements made by Hon’ble PM on 19 November 2014 with respect to Pacific countries (including Cook Islands) were the following: (i) Setting up of a Special Adaptation Fund of US\$ 1 million, (ii) Development of Pan Pacific Islands Project for telemedicine and tele-education, (iii) Indian Visa on arrival for Pacific Island Countries – “Cook Islands, Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu, Republic of Nauru, Republic of Kiribati, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Niue, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Fiji and Papua New Guinea”, (iv) Increase in Grant-in-Aid to Pacific Island Countries to US\$ 200,000 annually to be rolled over to provide for a wider scope for our development cooperation, (v) Establishment of Trade Office for Pacific Island Forum countries in India, (vi) Providing complimentary space to Pacific Island Forum countries during exhibitions, organized by ITPO, (vii) Deputation of ITEC experts to Pacific Island countries, including in the areas of agriculture, healthcare and IT, (viii) Organizing Training to Diplomats from Pacific Island Countries, (ix) Starting a Distinguished Visitors Programme for Pacific Island Countries, (x) Holding of the next Summit Meeting of India and Pacific Island Leaders in India in 2015, (xi) Cooperation in the use of Space technology applications for improving the quality of life of people and communications, (xii) Explore possibilities of sharing data for monitoring climate change, disaster risk reduction and management and resource management, and (xiii) Undertake joint research in traditional medicine; developing healthcare facilities for the benefit of people in the region.

**FIPIC-II:** While hosting second Summit of Forum for India Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC-II) at Jaipur, India, Hon’ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the following: (i) the establishment of an Institute for Sustainable Coastal and Ocean Research; and a Network of Marine Biology Research Stations in various Islands. (ii) holding an International Conference on “Ocean Economy and Pacific Island Countries” in New Delhi in 2016. (iii) Goodwill visits by Indian Navy to Pacific Islands will be held and extend support in areas of Healthcare through medical camps on the islands, (iv) the establishment of a Space Technology Applications Centre in any one of the Pacific Islands for the entire region and provide training in space applications. (v) Under ITEC cooperation, Fiji will receive 110 slots while the other 13 countries will double their slots from 119 to 238. In addition, two Scholarships for College Education in India to each of the 13 countries that do not receive them yet, whilst Fiji will continue to receive its existing 33 scholarships. India will also expand its Training Courses for Pacific Island diplomats and offer a two-week Business Management Course at the globally renowned Indian Institute of Management in Bengaluru. (vi) India would train 70 women solar engineers from the islands and provide solar electrification to 2,800 houses – 200 houses in each Pacific Island Country; (vii) the establishment of at least one Information Technology Laboratory in each Pacific Island

Country which will not only improve local IT infrastructure but also enable the countries to fulfill India's commitment to provide tele-medicine and tele-education to the Pacific. (viii) The FIPIC Trade Office in New Delhi will support the development of micro, small and medium enterprises and will extend support for purchase of machinery for coconut processing and enhancing rice and sugarcane yields. The Office will assist in improving Market Access for Pacific Islands.

Two diplomats from the Cook Islands attended the training for diplomats of Pacific Island countries organised by the Foreign Service Institute in Nadi, Fiji in May, 2015. Ms Punanga Kaveao, Foreign Service Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in the 62nd Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) held at Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi from 27 July to 26 August 2016.

A Cook Islands delegation led by Mr. Nandi Glassie, Minister of Health, Justice & Parliamentary Services, Cook Islands, visited India to attend 2<sup>nd</sup> Summit of Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) held at Jaipur on 21 August 2015.

Third International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Cook Islands on 22 June 2017.

High Commissioner visited Cook Islands on 2 March 2017 to hand over grant of US\$ 6,90,846 to Mr. Mark Brown, Minister of Finance for funding of 16 Community Development projects. High Commissioner had meetings with Cook Islands Prime Minister Mr. Henry Puna and Ms. Tepaeru Herrmann, Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Immigration to discuss bilateral matters. High Commissioner also visited Takuvaine Town Child Welfare Clinic, Pokoinu Neighbourhood Watch, and Centre for disabled people. High Commissioner had meetings with Representatives of local 'Chamber of Commerce', and 'Business, Trade & Investment Board'.

**India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPISDC):** Government of India organized the India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPISDC) at Suva, Fiji on 25-26 May 2017. Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. (Dr.) V.K.Singh (Retd.) hosted the event, in which Cook Islands Finance Minister Mr. Mark Brown led the delegation. India signed MOU for setting up of Center of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) with Cook Islands during the Conference.

Cook Islands supported Indian candidature of Dr Neeru Chadha to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in June 2017.

#### **Useful Resources:**

**High Commission of India, Suva website:** <http://www.indianhighcommissionfiji.org>

**High Commission of India, Suva Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/IndiainFiji>

**Indian Cultural Centre, High Commission of India, Suva Facebook page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/ICCHighcomindSuva>

**Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/HCI\\_Suva](https://twitter.com/HCI_Suva);

**YouTube Channel:** India in Fiji

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJYT5H3NwEB10MdiXizST2g>

\*\*\*\*

**August 2017**