

High Commission of India

Suva

India – Fiji Bilateral Relations

Historical Perspective

India's links with Fiji commenced in 1879 when Indian laborers were brought here under indenture system to work on sugarcane plantations. Between 1879 and 1916 around 60,553 Indians were brought to Fiji. Beginning with early 20th century, Indian traders and others also started arriving in Fiji. In 1920, the indenture system was abolished. Currently, of the 886,416 population (as of 1 March 2017), 37% are people of Indian origin.

Prior to Fiji's independence in 1970, India had a Commissioner since 1948 to look after the interests of people of Indian origin. It was later upgraded to High Commissioner after independence. Fiji's Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara visited India in 1971 and Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi visited Fiji in 1981. Following political developments in Fiji, the High Commission of India and Indian Cultural Centre were closed in May 1990. The High Commission of India was subsequently reopened in March 1999 and the Indian Cultural Centre in February 2005. Fiji established its High Commission in New Delhi in January 2004.

Public Sector Undertakings: Four Government of India undertakings, viz, New India Assurance Company Ltd. (since 1954), Life Insurance Corporation of India (since 1956), Bank of Baroda (since 1961), are functioning in Fiji; Water and Power Consultancy Services Ltd (Since 2015)

Recent Visits to India

Year-2016: Acting-Commander RFMF Rear Admiral Viliame Naupoto attended International Fleet Review held in Visakhapatnam, India on February 5, 2016. Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum visited New Delhi on February 16, 2016 to discuss Air Services Agreement. He again visited for IMF Conference, Advancing Asia held in New Delhi, on 11 March. David Kolitagane, Permanent Secretary for Public Enterprise attended Maritime India Summit held from 14-16 April 2016, in Mumbai. Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama visited India on 19-21 May during his stopover, on his way to the United Nations World Humanitarian Summit in Turkey and had meeting with Indian Prime Minister. Justice Sunil Lal visited India to attend 17th International conference for chief justice of the world, in Lucknow on 9-15 November 2016. Mr Inia Seruiratu, Minister of Agriculture, attended the First Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR), in New Delhi on 2- 5 November 2016

Year-2017: Ms. Rosy Akbar, Minister for Health and Medical Services, visited New Delhi for Raisina Dialogue on 17-19 January 2017. Supervisor of Elections, Mohammed Saneem, visited New Delhi and signed MOU with Election Commission of India (ECI) on 24 January 2017. Amb Yogesh Karan, Fijian Permanent Secretary to the Office of Prime Minister, and Amb Robin Nair, Permanent Secretary Foreign Affairs visited New Delhi for 3rd round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) held in New Delhi on 21 February 2017. Attorney-General Mr. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum visited New Delhi on and signed Air Services Agreement with Indian Civil Aviation Minister on 8 March 2017. Minister for Health and Medical Services, Ms. Rosy Akbar, accompanied with Permanent Secretary for Health and Medical Service, Phillip Davies visited India for recruitment of Physicians for Fiji Hospitals in May 2017. Minister of Defence and National Security Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, visited India for signing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for strengthening defence and security ties including in defence production and military training on 28-30, May 2017.

Recent Visits from India

Year-2016: Mr Sambhu Kumaran, Joint Secretary (PIC) and Commander Sanjeev Kumar JD, DNI visited Fiji from 15-17 February to hold discussion with Fijian Navy on Defence cooperation. A specialized team from India including Atul Kumar Agarwal, DGM of PGCIL, Mukesh Khanna, AGM of

PGCIL, Rajesh Sharma, GM NHPC, and Padam Narayan, Deputy Manager of SECI visited Fiji on 10 April, to assist with the restoration of power to areas affected by TC Winston. A delegation consisting of Jawhar Sircar, CEO, Prasar Bharati, and P Das DDG (Tech & IR) visited Fiji to attend the ABU Pacific Media Partnership Conference, held in Nadi, Fiji from 20-21 May. RS Sharma, Chairman, TRAI and Sanjeev Bansal, Advisor TRAI attended Global Policy Forum Meeting in Nadi On 7-9 September 2016. Shashi Ranjan Kumar , Joint Secretary (T), DOT and I S Shastri , Joint Administrator (Tech), DOT attended 56th Council Meeting and the Annual Forum of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO) on 12-16 September 2016.

Year 2017: Smt. Ananya Ray, Special Secretary (Ministry of Finance) & Member (Customs) visited Suva to attend the World Customs Organisation Asia-Pacific Heads of Customs Meeting on 14-16 March 2017. Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. (Dr.) V.K.Singh (Retd.) visited Fiji on 24-26 May 2017.

India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPISDC): Government of India organized the India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPISDC) which was held at Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji on 25-26 May 2017. Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. (Dr.) V.K.Singh (Retd.) hosted the event. The Conference saw the participation of several high profile leaders from the 14 Pacific Island Nations. India signed MoUs for setting up of Centers of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) with Fiji, Cook Islands, Nauru, Samoa and Niue. India and Fiji also signed three MOUs for 'Co-operation in Youth Development', 'Cooperation between Broadcasting Agencies', 'Cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy'. Prasar Bharati of India also gifted programmatic content on India for telecast to all the Pacific Island Countries. India announced assistance of US\$ 1mn for Fiji's COP23 Presidency Trust Fund.

Fiji signed and ratified the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance. Fiji supported our candidature to ITLOS and International Law Commission.

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, visited Fiji on 19 November 2014. During the visit three MoUs were signed with Fiji: (i) MoU for Extending a Line of Credit for Establishing a Co-Generation Plant in Fiji, (ii) MoU on Cooperation in the field of training of diplomats, and (iii) MoU on the Earmarking of Land for their Diplomatic Missions in the respective Capitals.

Indian Assistance: Hon'ble PM's announcements on 19 November 2014 with respect to Fiji were as follows: (i) India to support construction of Fijian Parliament Library, (ii) Visa on arrival for Fiji nationals, (iii) Provision of US\$ 5 million fund for promoting small business and village enterprise in Fiji, (iv) Extension of LoC for US\$ 70 mn for a co-generation project, (v) Increase ITEC (Civil & Defence) and scholarship slots to Fiji to 125, (vi) Enhancing cooperation in the development of rice, coconut and dairy industry in Fiji, (vii) India to extend support to promote IT and 'Digital Fiji', (viii) Enhancing collaboration in the area of space technology, including for its application in governance, economic development, conservation, climate change and natural disasters, and (ix) Encouragement to Indian film industry to shoot in Fiji & (x) Increasing annual grant-in-aid to US\$ 200,000 from US\$ 125,000.

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. Fijian delegation, led by Prime Minister Hon'ble Josaia Vorenqe Bainimarama, attended the Summit. The announcements made by Hon'ble PM on 19 November 2014 with respect to Pacific countries (including Fiji) 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.

Government of India earlier provided five sets of motorized sugarcane crushing units, dialysis machines indelible ink and five Mahindra Genio and five Mahindra Scorpio vehicles, 300 Sewing Machines, 5000 Akash Tablets, 800 medical diagnostic kits, two Mahindra tractors and two units of Mahindra Scorpio to Government of Fiji. India also gave US\$ 100,000/- after Cyclone Tomas (March 2010); US\$ 200,000 (July 2012) following floods, and US\$ 100,000 (2013) after the cyclone Evan to Fiji. India donated US\$ 1mn and supplied US\$ 3mn worth of aid after Tropical Cyclone Winston struck Fiji on 20th February 2016. India also provided US\$ 1.3mn for renovation of 20 schools damaged in Winston cyclone in February 2017. India extended US\$ 50.4 million Line of Credit in July 2005 for up-gradation of sugar mills in Fiji. Another Lines of Credit (LOCs) of USD 5.38 million for Up-gradation of sugar industry in Fiji and US\$ 70 million for Cogeneration of Power Plant at Rarawai Sugar Mill were extended in February 2015. As per MOA signed with Fijian Minister for Industry, Trade Hon Faiyaz Khoya on 21 June, 2016 Indian Government is providing grant of F\$ 4.7 million (US\$ 2.2 million) for promotion of SMEs. Indian Naval Ship Sumitra did goodwill visit to Fiji on 26-29 October 2016. INS Sumitra carried five tons of vegetable seeds, worth US\$ 1.23mn, which were handed over to Fijian Minister of Agriculture.

Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) / Pravasi Bhartiya Samman (PBS): PBS awardees from Fiji are: (i) Mr. Mahendra Chaudhry, former PM (2004); (ii) Golfer Mr. Vijay Singh (2005); (iii) Late Sir Moti Tika Ram, former Supreme Court Judge (2007), (iv) Mr. Y.P. Reddy, Reddy Group Chairman and Chairman, (v) Girit Council (2010), (vi) RamKrishna Mission (2014) (viii) Mr Vinod Patel, businessman got award

for social service in (2017). 42 Indo-Fijians attended Know India Programme event in January 2017, out of total 160 KIP participants.

Human Resource Development: Following PM's announcement during his visit to Fiji, annual ITEC slots had been increased from 55 to 110, Fiji utilized 87 slots out of 150 slots in 2016-17. Under TCS Colombo plan, 30 slots are available, out of that 17 have been utilized by Fiji. Prof Balakrishnan Diwaker worked at ICCR's Chair at Fiji National University (FNU) for November 2015-December 2016. Under the General Scholarship Scheme of ICCR, 29 scholarships were offered to Fiji for 2015-16. Fiji utilized 13 scholarships. 30 ICCR scholarships were offered for 2016-17. Fiji utilized 10 scholarships. For the Financial Year 2017-18, 30 ICCR scholarships were offered to Fiji. Out of which 9 scholarships have been utilized till date. Non-country specific scholarships are also offered for Diaspora Children by MOIA, Certificate/Diploma Course in Hindi conducted by Kendriya Hindi Sansthans, New Delhi and Agra, and AYUSH scholarship scheme in traditional medicine. One student from Fiji availed of AYUSH scholarship for the first time in 2012. An assistance worth Rs. 26 Lakh (US\$ 40,000) was provided to University of South Pacific, in November 2016, for continuation of Hindi classes in the University.

Consular: The number of Indians living in Fiji is about 1400, mostly engaged in services like IT, management, finance, banking, educational, medical, hotel industry etc.

Tourism: India Tourism Office, Sydney participated in the Hibiscus festival of 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. The festival is held in August every year in Suva.

Commercial and Economic Relations

Bilateral Trade:

Year	Exports to India	Import from India	Trade Imbalance
2012-2013	1.38	41.01	39.69
2013-2014	2.0	48.74	46.74
2014-2015	1.8	49.75	47.95
2015-2016	0.37	44.15	43.78
2016-2017	0.60	52.70	42.92

(Source: Department of Commerce, Government of India) in US\$ Millions

Banking: MoU on Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information between the Reserve Bank of India and the Reserve Bank of Fiji was signed in March 2013.

Healthcare

Sahyadri: An Agreement between the Sahyadri Group of Hospitals, Pune and Ministry of Health, Government of Fiji was signed in July 2012 to provide tertiary health care facilities in Fiji (valid for five years). Team of specialist doctors from India comes every quarter, does health screening and conduct heart and other surgeries in Fiji. Several patients travel to India for medical treatment in super specialty hospitals (like Apollo, Forties, BLK, Devyani Hospitals etc.). Apollo Hospitals in April 2013 signed an MoU with the Fiji National University (FNU), for cooperation in training and capacity building and organizing a telemedicine / mobile health programme. In August 2013, Apollo's telemedicine center at Fiji National University (FNU)'s campus was opened. Apollo-Fiji Health Forum was held at Suva on 21 April 2017.

Jaipur Foot: Health specialists from Fiji underwent prosthetic training at the Jaipur Foot organization (Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS), in July-September 2010). A specialist team from BMVSS visited Fiji in June 2011 at the invitation of the Ministry of Health of Fiji to carry out limb fitments and help establish an artificial limbs unit at the CWM Hospital, Suva.

Indian Community: The journey of Girmitee (contract for indentured labourers) started in Fiji in 1879 and ended in 1920. About 60,553 Indentured labourers came to Fiji during that period mainly for sugarcane plantation. Hindi is widely spoken and is the third Official language in Fiji (English and iTaukei are two

other languages). There are over 2,000 Ramayana Mandalies, which do Bhajana / Kirtana on regular basis in Fiji. Indian Diapsora celebrates Ramlila, Diwali, Holi, Chat puja, Ganesh festival, Durga puja, Eid, Rath Yatra etc. Approximately 1400 Indian expats are residing in Fiji.

Cultural Relations: An Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) in Fiji was established by GOI in 1972 (which is first ever such centre abroad). ICC provides classes in seven streams: Indian classical music (Karnataki, Tabla, Harmonium) and dance (Bharatnatyam, Kathak), Hindi language and Yoga. ICC organizes cultural evenings, exhibitions, film shows, workshops and discussions regularly. Five ICCR sponsored groups performed in major cities of Fiji since July 2016. Two Fijian group participated in dance festivals in India in 2016-17. High Commission of India in Fiji, Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts of Fiji and FSSS jointly organized First-Ever 'International Ramayan Conference (IRC)' in Fiji from 14-16 October 2016. India celebrated 3rd International Day of Yoga at Suva with 3,000 school children on 21 June 2017.

Film Festivals: Fiji National University and Film Fiji, in association with the High Commission of India and others organized International Film Festivals in 2012; 2013, 2014 and 2015. India participated in Film festival organized by UNICEF in December 2016. "Mary Kom" was screened during the event.

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;

YouTube Channel: India in Fiji <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJYT5H3NwEB10MdiXizST2g>

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