

High Commission of India
Suva

India-Tuvalu Bilateral Relations

Bilateral relations between India and Tuvalu have grown steadily since the reopening of the High Commission of India, Suva, in 1999.

Tuvalu was one of the 34 Co-sponsors of G-4's draft resolution on UNSC reform in 2005. Tuvalu supported India's candidature for the position of Commonwealth Secretary General election held in Kampala in November 2007.

For Tuvalu (only four meters above sea level at highest point), climate change is a major concern. Tuvalu had criticized the Copenhagen Accord on Climate Change (arrived at COP 15, December 2009) prepared by US and BASIC countries.

Government of India announced US\$ 100,000 Grant-aid to all Pacific Island countries during the Post Forum Dialogue partner meeting in 2006 and during the subsequent years (US\$ 125,000 since 2009). The Grant has been used for providing computers and medicines & medical equipments for the Princess Margaret Hospital, the only Government hospital situated in its Capital Funafuti in September 2007 and March 2009 respectively at a total cost of US \$ 116,712.

Two chain-saws were supplied in 2012. India had provided funds for supply of a lawn-mower and a grass cutter in March 2013. India approved funds for purchase of new ambulance for Princess Margaret Hospital, Funafuti in September 2014 and Purchase of medical equipments for Princess Margaret Hospital, Funafuti in October 2014.

Four officials from Tuvalu availed of training facilities under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme in 2012-13 and seven officials in 2013-14. Out of 15 allotted, 8 ITEC slots were utilized in 2014-15. Four ITEC slots have been utilized out of 10 allotted for the year 2015-16.

Three students from Tuvalu availed of ICCR's General Cultural Scholarship Scheme in 2011-12 and five in 2012-13. For 2013-14 five slots were offered to Tuvalu which were completely utilized.

Rt. Hon. Sir Kamuta Latasi, Speaker of Parliament, Tuvalu, visited India to attend 20th Conference of Commonwealth Speakers in New Delhi from 4-8 January, 2010. Mr. Mainagar Taope, Manager, Tuvalu Cooperative Society visited India to participate in the Chefs-de-Mission seminar held at New Delhi from 8-12 March, 2010. The Queen's Baton Relay (QBR) for the Commonwealth Games held in New Delhi in October 2010 passed through Tuvalu from 29-30 May, 2010.

India has offered to support waste management projects in Tuvalu to be taken up under the IBSA Trust Fund.

One diplomat from Tuvalu attended the special course for Pacific diplomats organized by FSI in Nadi, Fiji in May 2015. Mrs. Misalaima Nelesone, Permanent Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training of Government of Tuvalu attended International Workshop on Government Performance Management in New Delhi organised by Institute of Public Enterprise in July 2013.

GOI contributed US\$ 100,000 to the Government of Tuvalu in February 2012 for storage, supply and management of water following the severe drought in Tuvalu.

Mrs. Misalaima Nelesone, Permanent Secretary, Personnel and Training Department, attended International Workshop on Government Performance Management at the Institute of Public Enterprise organized at New Delhi from 1st to 12th July 2013 under ITEC programme.

Shri Deepak Jain is Honorary Consul General of Tuvalu in New Delhi since 2013.

A delegation led by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taukelina Finikaso visited India in August 2013 for the commissioning of the new Tuvalu Consulate office in New Delhi. Tuvalu delegation, led by Mr. Fauoa Maani, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, 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.

Prime Minister of Tuvalu, H.E. Mr. Enele Sosene Sopoaga was one of the honored guests at the ITEC Day 2013 organized by the High Commission on 29 November 2013.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hosted the First Summit Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIIC-I) in Suva (Fiji) during the visit on 19 November 2014 with the participation of 14 Pacific countries. Tuvalu delegation was led by the Governor-General Sir Italeli Iakoba, attended the Summit. The announcements made by Hon'ble PM on 19 November 2014 with respect to Pacific countries (including Tuvalu) 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.

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.

A Tuvalu delegation led by Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, visited India to attend 2nd Summit of Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) held at Jaipur on 21 August 2015.

Tuvalu supported our candidature of Mr Aniruddha Rajput for membership in the International Law Commission, elections for which were held on 3 November 2016, in New York.

Hon Samuela Penitala Teo, Special Envoy for Disaster, attended the First Asian Ministerial Disaster Risk Reduction Conference, in New Delhi from 2 to 5 November 2016.

H.E. Sir Iakoba T Italeli, Governor General attended 17th International Conference of Chief Justice, held in Lucknow from 9-15 November 2016.

Mr. Avafoa Irata, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Utilities and Infrastructures signed Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance in Marrakech, Morocco on 15th November 2016. Tuvalu has also ratified the Framework Agreement and became the founder member of the International Solar Alliance, an India-France initiative.

Mr Leopold Kenieti Paeniu, United Nations Desk Officer, attended 63rd Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) held at Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi from 29 March 2017 to 28 April 2017.

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 Hon. Maatia Toafa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Development, led the Tuvalu delegation.

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

Third International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Tuvalu on 23 June 2017.

ICCR-sponsored Bollywood dance group 'Taka-Dimi-Ta' mesmerized thousands of people at three performances including that of Tuvalu Prime Minister's residence during the India@70 celebrations in Tuvalu and from 17-22 August 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;

YouTube Channel: India in Fiji

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJYT5H3NWEB10MdiXizST2g>

August 2017