

**High Commission of India  
Suva**

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**India-Vanuatu Bilateral Brief**

Diplomatic relations with Vanuatu were established in 1986. Till mid-2000, the Indian High Commission in Canberra was accredited to Vanuatu. The accreditation was transferred to HCI, Port Moresby in August 2000 and to HCI Suva in June 2014.

**Bilateral Relations**

In 1983, the Deputy Prime Minister of Vanuatu met Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi during the Non-aligned Summit meeting in New Delhi. The Transport Minister of Vanuatu attended the World Infrastructural Forum in New Delhi in October 1996. Former Prime Minister H.E. Barak Sope visited India in 1983 as a member of the Vanuatu delegation to the Non-Aligned Summit in New Delhi.

**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. Vanuatu delegation was led by the Minister for Foreign Affairs Hon. Meltek Sato Kilman, attended the Summit. The announcements made by Hon'ble PM on 19 November 2014 with respect to Pacific countries (including Vanuatu) 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.

### **ITEC**

India has been offering 10 training slots under the ITEC Programme every year.

### **Grant-in-Aid**

As part of Government of India's Regional Assistance Initiatives for Pacific Island countries, India offers annual grant-in-aid for development projects in Vanuatu.

Two diplomats from Vanuatu attended the training for diplomats of Pacific Island countries organised by the Foreign Service Institute in Nadi, Fiji in May 2015.

Following "Cyclone Pam" in March 2015, India gave a grant of US\$ 2,50,000 as humanitarian assistance.

### **Visits:**

**From India to Vanuatu:** Hon'ble Union Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines, Shri Piyush Goyal led a thirteen-member Indian delegation to Republic of Vanuatu on 25-26 October, 2016. During this visit, the Minister held meetings with H.E. Mr. Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas, Prime Minister of Republic of Vanuatu and Hon'ble Mr. Bruno Leingkone Tau, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and discussed India-Vanuatu bilateral relations.

Vanuatu has acknowledged India's commitment for strengthening bilateral ties through this first ever ministerial visit from India to Republic of Vanuatu. During the visit, Shri Goyal handed over a cheque of US\$ 1,90,000 to Mr. Bruno Leingkone Tau as an assistance for providing ICT equipment to 76 schools of Vanuatu under India's annual grant. Further, Shri Goyal announced that LED bulbs and other Energy Efficient equipment worth US\$ 2,00,000 will be supplied from India to Vanuatu under Government of India's annual grant to Vanuatu.

Vanuatu is in favour of expansion of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and supports India's position for its candidature to permanent membership to the extended UNSC. India appreciated valuable support of Vanuatu to its candidature of

permanent membership to the UNSC. Vanuatu has also conveyed its support to India's candidature for non-permanent seat on the UNSC for year 2021-22.

Shri Piyush Goyal and Mr. Bruno Leingkone Tau, Foreign Minister signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Establishing India-Vanuatu Centre of Excellence in IT (CEIT). Shri Piyush Goyal and Mr. Joe Natuman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade, Tourism, Commerce and Industry of Vanuatu addressed the India-Vanuatu Business interaction meeting today, in which seven representatives from Indian public sector companies -NTPC, PGCIL, SECI, CDAC and EESL- participated along with several companies from Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce. During his visit, Shri Goyal also interacted with Vanuatu Nationals who benefited from various courses under Indian Technical Economic Cooperation (ITEC). He also had the opportunity to interact with Indian Nationals and several Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs).

**From Vanuatu to India;** A Vanuatu delegation led by Prime Minister Mr Meltek Sato Kilman, visited India to attend 2<sup>nd</sup> Summit of Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) held at Jaipur on 21 August 2015.

Mr. Alberick Jean Jacques Rory, Senior Health Officer, attended the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties (COP7) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) held in New Delhi from 7-12 November 2016.

Mr. Michael Ligo, Custom Audit Officer, from Department of Customs and Inland Revenue, visited India, to attend World Customs Organisation's Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on Intelligence-led Risk Management held at Faridabad, from 21-25 November 2016.

Mr. Kemson Tavdey, Foreign Service Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vanuatu participated in the 63<sup>rd</sup> Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) held at Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi from 29 March 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. Ham Lini Vanuaroroa, Minister of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazard, Environment, Energy and Disaster Management, led the Vanuatu delegation.

Vanuatu supported Indian candidature of Dr Neeru Chadha to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in June 2017. Vanuatu signed the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance, which is India-France initiative, in November 2016.

### **International Day of Yoga**

Second International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Vanuatu on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Third International Day of Yoga could not be organised due to passing away of the Vanuatu President on 19<sup>th</sup> 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>

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