

**High Commission of India
Port Louis**

India-Mauritius Bilateral Relations

Political Relations

Diplomatic relations between India and Mauritius were established in 1948. Earlier, Mauritius maintained contacts with India through successive Dutch, French and British occupation. From 1820s, Indian workers started coming to Mauritius to work on sugar plantations. From 1834, when slavery was abolished by the British Parliament, large numbers of Indian workers began to be brought to Mauritius as indentured labourers. November 2, 1834 marks the day when the ship 'Atlas' docked in Mauritius carrying the first batch of Indian indentured labourers. This day is now observed in Mauritius as 'Aapravasi Day'. In all, about half a million Indian indentured labourers are estimated to have been brought into Mauritius between 1834 and the early decades of the 20th century, out of whom about two-thirds settled permanently in Mauritius. Indian origin population constitutes about 68% of Mauritian population.

Mahatma Gandhi *en route* to India from South Africa made a brief stopover (October 29 to November 15, 1901), in Mauritius. As a tribute to Gandhiji and the Indian freedom struggle, the National Day of Mauritius is celebrated on March 12 (the date of launch of Dandi Salt March).

High level visits have been one of the significant aspects of bilateral relations.

- Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth visited India from 30-31 May 2019 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Prime Minister Jugnauth was invited since he was the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019.
- Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth visited India from 20 to 28 January 2019 to attend 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) in Varanasi as Chief Guest and to attend the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj.
- H.E. Mr. Paramasivam Pillay Vyapoory, Acting President of Republic of Mauritius visited India from 08-18 October 2018 to attend the first Pondicherry Global Economic Summit 2019 and the Fifth World Tamils Economic Conference in Pondicherry.
- The 11th World Hindi Conference (WHC) was held in Mauritius from 18-20 August 2018. The theme of the conference is "Hindi Vishwa Aur Bharateey Sanskriti" (Global Hindi and Indian Culture). The inaugural ceremony of the conference, were attended by Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and Hon. External Affairs Minister of India Smt. Sushma Swaraj.
- President, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, visited Mauritius on a four-day State Visit from 11 to 14 March 2018. The President was the chief Guest of the Government on the occasion of celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Mauritius.
- Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth under took a State Visit to India from 26-28 May 2017, which was the first visit abroad undertaken by Prime Minister Jugnauth after he assumed office on 23 January 2017.
- President Ameenah Gurib-Fakim visited India from 17-27 November 2016.
- The then Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth visited India from 09-21 November 2016.
- Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Mr. Pravind Jugnauth was on an official visit to India from 12-18 September 2016.
- President Dr Ameenah Gurib-Fakim paid a 4-day Official visit to India from 6-9 December 2015.

- The then Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth visited New Delhi in October 2015 as head of the Mauritian delegation at the third India-Africa Forum Summit.
- Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited Mauritius from 11-13 March 2015, as Chief Guest at the Mauritian National Day celebrations.
- The then Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam was the only non-SAARC leader to be invited to witness the swearing in ceremony of the new Government in New Delhi in May 2014.
- Hon'ble President Pranab Mukherjee paid a state visit to Mauritius from 11-13 March 2013, during which he was the Chief Guest at the country's 45th Independence Day celebrations.

Commercial Relations

India is one of the largest trading partners and exporter of goods and services to Mauritius since 2007. In FY 2018-19 (April 2018 to March 2019) India exported goods worth US\$ 1160.78 million to Mauritius and imported goods worth US\$ 71.59 million from Mauritius. India's exports to Mauritius comprises largely of petroleum products. Besides petroleum products, main items of India's exports to Mauritius are pharmaceuticals, cereals, cotton, shrimps and prawns, frozen boneless bovine meat. Main items of Mauritius exports to India are Vanilla, Instruments and apparatus for medical/surgical sciences, Needles, Aluminum alloys etc.

Cumulative FDI equity inflows from Mauritius to India during the period April 2000-March 2019 amounted to USD 134.46 billion (32% of total FDI inflows over this period). Mauritius was the single largest source of FDI into India during the financial year 2017-18, with FDI equity inflows amounting to USD 15.94 billion. During the period from April 2018 to March 2019, total FDI equity inflows amounting to USD 8.08 billion.

The protocol amending the India-Mauritius DTAC was signed on 10 May 2016. Following this, The Comprehensive Economic and Commercial Partnership Agreement (CECPA) talks were resumed in September 2016. The 7th round of discussions on the CECPA were held in Mauritius from 19-23 November 2018 and it is in its final stages of negotiations.

Eleven Indian Public Sector Enterprises are currently functioning in Mauritius. The Bank of Baroda (BoB), Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), and New India Assurance Corporation (NIAC) were the first to establish operations, followed by other PSUs including India Handloom House, Telecommunications Consultant India Ltd (TCIL), IndianOil (Mauritius) Limited (IOML), Mahanagar Telephone (Mauritius) Ltd. and State Bank of India (Mauritius) Limited, National Building and Construction Company Ltd (NBCC), Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES), and Hospital Services Consultancy Corporation Ltd. (HSCC). Besides their core activities, the PSUs have also contributed to various activities in Mauritius under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) schemes.

Cultural Relations

The Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture (IGCIC) at Phoenix is one of the largest centres of ICCR, which from March 2000, has emerged as an important venue for promotion of Indian cultural activities in Mauritius. The IGCIC holds classes in disciplines of Hindustani music, Kathak, Tabla and Yoga for Mauritian students. Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for 2018-2021 was renewed in March 2018.

To commemorate 50th anniversary of its Mauritius's independence in year 2018, the High Commission in collaboration with Ministry of Arts & Culture of Mauritius and ICCR organized an "India Week" in Mauritius from 14-22 April 2018. During this a series of activities across

different areas like dance, drama, music, film festival etc. were organised. Various cultural troupes and artists of International repute visit Mauritius to perform from time to time.

Other institutions built with India's assistance

The Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) was founded as a joint venture between the Government of India and the Government of Mauritius for the promotion of Indian culture and education. It also hosts the ICCR Chair in Sanskrit and Indian Philosophy.

The Rabindranath Tagore Institute was established with the assistance of the Government of India in 2000 as a Centre of Studies on Indian culture and traditions.

Mauritius also hosts the World Hindi Secretariat, which is a bilateral organization and was inaugurated during the visit of President in March 2018.

ITEC and other scholarships

Mauritius is one of the largest beneficiary countries of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme and for FY 2018-19, 210 Civilian slots and 169 defence slots and 5 slots each for IORA and World Hindi Secretariat were offered.

Mauritius is the largest beneficiary of Africa Scholarships under IAFS with 97 ICCR scholarships extended annually to Mauritian students for higher education in India. Another about 200 Mauritian students enrolls themselves in Indian Universities every year on a self-financing basis. India ranks fourth in terms of Mauritian students studying in overseas tertiary education institutions.

India-assisted Projects

Government of India in May 2016 agreed to provide a Special Economic Package (SEP) of USD 353 million for the execution of five projects of priority of Government of Mauritius (GOM), namely (i) Metro Express Project - USD 275 million; (ii) Supreme Court Building - USD 30 million; (iii) New ENT Hospital - USD 14 million; (iv) Social Housing project - USD 20 million; (v) Supply of digital tablets to primary school children - USD 14 million.

Some other India-assisted projects existing in Mauritius include the Upadhyay Training Centre, the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital, the Subramania Bharati Eye Centre, the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre and the Swami Vivekananda International Conference Centre (SVICC). The Cyber Tower in the business district of Mauritius (Ebene) was renamed as Atal Bihari Vajpayee Tower in August 2018.

Indian Community & OCI Card

There are nearly 10,000 Indian nationals in Mauritius. A special carve-out for OCI Cards, only for Mauritius, without any restriction on the number of generations, was announced during 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in January 2017. The number of OCI card holders in Mauritius is about 8500. Mauritius introduced a visa-free regime for Indian tourists in October 2004, whereby Indian tourists visiting Mauritius for a period up to 30 days do not require a visa. Mauritians are entitled to *gratis* E-tourist visa for visiting India.

Useful Resources:

Website: hcimauritius.gov.in

Facebook page: [facebook.com/india.inmauritius](https://www.facebook.com/india.inmauritius)

Twitter handle: @ HCL_PortLouis

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