

## **India - Cook Islands Relations**

India and the Cook Islands established diplomatic relations in 1998. Earlier Indian High Commissioner in New Zealand 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.

GOI had offered financial assistance worth approx. US \$ 50,000 to the Government of the Cook Islands in 2005 for executing small projects. GOI 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. GOI 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 GOI Grant-in-Aid in August 2012.

GOI had 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 three slots for 2015-16.

An official from HCI, Suva, visited Cook Islands from 20-26 May 2010 to coordinate passing of the Queen's Baton Relay (QBR) for the Commonwealth Games to be held in New Delhi in October 2010 through Cook Islands from 24-25 May 2010. An official from HCI, Suva attended the Round Table Meeting of Development Partners held in Rarotonga on 31 January 2012.

Hon'ble MOS(EA) Shri E. Ahamed 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 leaders of other 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.

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.

Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hosted the Forum for India-Pacific Island Countries (FIPIC) Summit in Suva (Fiji) on 19 November 2014 during his visit to Fiji, with the participation of 14 Pacific Island countries. Cook Islands delegation was led by Prime Minister Hon. Henry Puna. 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 \$ 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 \$ 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.

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.

International Day of Yoga was celebrated in the Cook Islands on 21 June 2015.

A Cook Islands delegation led by 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.

### **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>

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