

**High Commission of India
Port Moresby

India-PNG Bilateral Relations:

Political Relations

India and Papua New Guinea have formalized diplomatic relations since 19 May 1976. India opened its High Commission in Port Moresby in April 1996. Diplomatic relations with Papua New Guinea were earlier conducted from Suva/Kuala Lumpur. Papua New Guinea opened its resident Diplomatic Mission in New Delhi in October 2006. India and Papua New Guinea enjoy warm and friendly relations. The two countries have been working closely in international fora including the Commonwealth, Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations Organization.

The notable recent bilateral exchanges have been as follows:

From India to PNG

(i) The first ever visit of the Hon'ble President of India to PNG: Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paid a two-day State visit to Papua New Guinea from 28 to 29 April, 2016, at the invitation of the Governor General of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, Grand Chief Sir Michael Ogio. During the visit, four MoUs were signed, which include (a) Agriculture Research Cooperation between University of Technology, Lae (PNG), and Indian Council for Agricultural Research (India); (b) Cooperation in the Health Sector; (c) an Indian Line of Credit for Development of Infrastructure in PNG; and (d) an MoU for Setting up a Centre of Excellence in IT by India in PNG.

(ii) The Hon'ble President also made an announcement about retro-viral drugs and equipment to be provided by Government of India, for HIV patients in PNG.

(iii) A three-member Indian delegation led by Dr. M. Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, participated in the 3rd Ministerial Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) Conference which was held in Port Moresby on 23-25 August, 2017.

(iv) A two-member delegation comprising Chartered Accountant M. Devaraja Reddy, Past President, Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), and Chartered Accountant Mangesh P. Kinare, Council Member of ICAI paid a visit to Port Moresby from 17 to 19 July 2018 and held discussions with the Certified Practising Accountants (CPA) PNG and the Society of Indian Chartered Accountants Inc. to facilitate and support the application of CPA PNG for International Federation of Accountants (IFAC).

(v) A two-member delegation from EXIM Bank of India and Under Secretary (DPA-I), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India visited Papua New Guinea from 25- 29 November 2018 and met the local authorities to finalize the Agreement of Line of Credit of US\$100 million between the Export-Import Bank of India for the purpose of financing infrastructure related projects (US\$60 million for

Bayer-Madang road project and US\$40 million for Hoskins Kimbe road project) in Papua New Guinea. The delegation also visited the site of Hoskins-Kimbe road project.

Some of the visits which took place during the past few years from both sides have been as follows:

From PNG to India

(i) Chief Electoral Commissioner Mr. Patilias Gamato and two officials from PNG Election Commission visited Bengaluru from 10-16 May 2018 to witness Karnataka Assembly elections and interacted with BEL officials regarding EVMs/VVPATs.

(ii) A PNG delegation led by Hon. Sam Basil, Minister for ICT and Energy visited India to attend the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance held in New Delhi on 11 March 2018.

(iii) A 25-member PNG delegation led by Hon. Richard Maru, Minister for National Planning & Monitoring, including Hon. Sam Basil, Minister for ICT and Energy, Hon. Nick Kuman, Minister for Education and Hon. Sasindran Muthuvel, Governor of West New Britain, visited India from 10 to 16 December 2017

(iv) Ms. Janet Sape, President/Founder of PNG Women in Business, participated in the Distinguished Visitors Programme which was held in India from 8-17 February, 2016.

(v) PNG Prime Minister, Peter O'Neill, visited India for the FIPIC Summit held in Jaipur on 21 August, 2015, and outlined PNG's desire to see greater engagement by India with Pacific Island nations in the field of climate change, natural disasters, healthcare, education and other areas. He also held a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister on the sidelines of the Summit.

(vi) Mr. Richard Maru, Minister of Trade, Commerce & Industry, visited India in January 2013 to attend the Partnership Summit 2013. He was accompanied by a delegation consisting of Mr. Sasindran Muthuvel, Governor of West New Britain Province and officials of Investment Promotion Agency. He held bilateral talks with Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce & Industry.

(vii) Mr. William Duma, former Minister for Petroleum & Energy was invited as the Chief Guest at the Founding Day celebrations of Petronet LNG Ltd. in New Delhi on 2 April, 2013. He visited India from 30 March to 3 April, 2013 and was accompanied by an 8-member delegation, which included senior officials of his Ministry, an Adviser from Prime Minister's office and a few businessmen.

(viii) Petronet/OVL delegations later visited PNG twice and held discussions with State-owned Petromin LNG Holdings Ltd. and various stakeholders in the LNG sector. An in-principle agreement was reached with Petromin for India off-taking of 22.5% gas from the proposed Gulf LNG Project. Discussions were also held with InterOil and others concerned for possible Indian participation in the Gulf LNG Project.

(ix) A Parliamentary delegation, led by Speaker Theodore Zurenuoc, visited India from 26-30 August, 2013, to bolster Parliamentary linkages between the two Commonwealth Parliamentary democracies.

(x) Brigadier General Francis Agwi, Chief of PNGDF, visited India in June 2013 to attend the passing out ceremony of PNGDF Cadet Officer at the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun. During the visit, he also had meetings with the Chief of Indian Army, Chief of Indian Navy and Vice-Chief of Indian Air Force in New Delhi.

(xi) PNG Foreign Minister, Sam Abal, paid a four-day visit to India in July 2009. This was the first ever bilateral Ministerial visit between the two countries, during which he called on the External Affairs Minister, Minister of Commerce & Industry, Minister of State (ST), Ministry of External Affairs, and Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Humanitarian Aid and other assistance

India has been providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief to PNG from time to time. The latest assistance has been in the form of drugs for HIV/AIDS patients in PNG, as has been requested by them. A consignment of 7.2 million dosages of anti-retro viral drugs received from India, valued at Rs. 15 crores (approx. US\$ 3 million), was handed over to the Government of Papua New Guinea in November 2016, by the Indian High Commissioner. Computers and peripherals worth US\$7.60 lakh out of the cumulative grant-in-aid under India's Regional Assistance to Pacific Island Countries were also provided to the Government of Papua New during the year 2017-18.

India has also been assisting PNG in their capacity-building efforts by way of training under Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) & Colombo Plan.

Aid proposals in various other fields submitted by the Government of PNG, under the annual grant-in-aid, are under implementation by the Indian side.

Economic & Commercial Relations :

The export/Import trends between the two countries since 2013 have been as follows:

	Values in US \$ millions				
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Export	43.96	52.19	39.45	36.35	41.93
Import	178.30	157.29	179.59	108.06	196.19
Total Trade	222.26	209.48	219.04	144.41	238.12

The main items of exports to PNG include textiles, machinery & equipment, food items, manufactured goods, pharmaceuticals, surgical items, soap, washing powder, paper pulp, etc. However, these are not reflective of the actual trade since import of many Indian goods is via third countries. The main imports to India from PNG are gold, copper ores & concentrates, timber, copra, marine products, coffee, vanilla and cocoa.

Visit of first-ever CII Delegation to PNG: The first-ever CII delegation from India paid a 4-day visit to Papua New Guinea from 14-18 February, 2016, to explore business opportunities, and had fruitful meetings and interactions with a number of high ranking dignitaries, including the Prime Minister, in latter's office. The delegation called on Minister of Trade, Commerce & Industry, and had useful interactions with various dignitaries including the (a) Minister for Tourism Arts and Culture, (b) Governor of West New Britain Province, (c) NCD Governor, (d) Minister for Mines, (e) Governor of the Western Highlands Province, and other high level dignitaries at different events.

The delegation was also hosted by a number of dignitaries, including (a) the Ministry/Minister of Health, (b) Minister of Public Enterprises and State Investments; (c) Minister for Petroleum; (d) Governor of Hela Province; and (e) Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. The Prime Minister's wife, on whom the lady delegation members called on, also hosted them at the National Parliament of PNG.

Visit of Indian Naval Ship 'Sahyadri' to Port Moresby: The Indian Naval Ship 'Sahyadri', commanded by Captain Anil Jaggi with more than 200 crew members on board, paid a goodwill visit to Port Moresby from 12 to 15 June, 2017. High Commissioner of India and Captain Anil Jaggi jointly hosted a Dinner on Board on 13 June for about 300 dignitaries from PNG Defence Forces, relevant Ministries, Diplomatic Missions and Indian business/community members. This was the second visit in series, the first one was from 22 to 24 July, 2006, by the Indian Missile Frigate Naval Ship 'Tabar'.

Cultural Relations

The recent cultural interactions/initiatives include visit of an ICCR-sponsored Siddhi Dhamal dance troupe in October 2013 to PNG. The troupe performed at the open Jack Pidik Park in Port Moresby which was hosted by the Governor of National Capital District Commission (NCDC) and was well attended.

In association with the University of Papua New Guinea the Mission organized an Indian Film Festival at the University of PNG from 7-12 June, 2013, where Indian films were screened. A set of the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi was also presented to the University of PNG Library separately.

During the International Yoga Day in 2015, a Yoga demonstration was organized by the Mission at the Ela Beach where a number of PNG nationals participated.

The International Yoga Day 2016 was marked by holding Yoga demonstrations at four different places in PNG, i.e. Port Moresby, Kokopo, Wewak, and Goroka. In Port Moresby it was held at the prestigious Taurama & Acquatics & Sports Stadium on 21 June, 2016, with about 600 participants. The occasion was graced by the First Lady of PNG (wife of the Prime Minister), Ms. Lynda Babao O'Neill, and included senior dignitaries, Governor of NCD, Minister of Petroleum, Governor of West New Britain, and members of the Diplomatic community, as also members of Indian community, and sporting teams, in Port Moresby.

On the occasion of the International Day of Yoga 2017, events were organized in Port Moresby, Kimbe, Madang and Lae. In Port Moresby the event was co-hosted by the Mission and the Governor of National Capital District, Powes Parkop, and Yoga demonstrations were held at Ela Murray School ground. Around 200 persons from different walks of life participated.

The 4th International Day of Yoga was celebrated in conjunction with the University of Papua New Guinea on 21 June 2018. Around 150 yoga enthusiasts participated in the Yoga. Teacher of Indian Culture (TIC) Ajit Singh conducted yoga sessions. H.E. Mr. Sasindran Muthvel, Governor, West New Britain Province, who is also Pravasi Bharatiya Samaan Awardee, was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

An MoU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the PNG University of Technology, Lae was signed on 17 August 2018 by the High Commissioner Shri Vijai Kumar, on behalf of ICCR, for establishment of a long-term ICCR Chair of Indian Studies at the University of Technology, Lae.

Indian Community: There are approximately 3,000 Indians working in PNG in various capacities. This includes professionals like Chartered Accountants, University Professors, School Teachers, Doctors, and those working in different fields like IT, finance, trading, businesses, missionary workers, etc. There are influential Indians owning directly or in partnership, prominent super stores and businesses. The Governor of the West New Britain Province of PNG Hon. Sasindran Muthvel is an Indian origin and a Pravasi Bharatiya Samaan Awardee. The Indian Association of PNG is active and has been associated with developmental work in PNG.

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