

**High Commission of India
Wellington

INDIA – NEW ZEALAND BILATERAL BRIEF

1. India and New Zealand share warm and friendly ties. Diplomatic relations were established in 1952. Both countries share similarities such as membership of the Commonwealth, common law practices and pursuing shared aspirations of achieving economic development and prosperity through democratic governance systems for diverse communities. Tourism and sporting links, particularly cricket, hockey and mountaineering, have played a significant role in fostering goodwill.
2. NZ identified India as a priority country in its “*Opening Doors to India*” policy notified in October 2011, which was reiterated in 2015. In 2011, NZ launched the NZ Inc. India Strategy, aiming to make India a core trade, economic and political partner for NZ. On the eve of the visit of DPM / Foreign Minister of NZ to India from 25-28 February 2020, NZ released the Strategy Paper “*India-NZ 2025 – Investing in the Relationship*”, which builds on earlier policy papers and envisions a more “enduring strategic relationship” with India over the next five years.

RECENT BILATERAL VISITS AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS

HOS/HOG VISITS / MEETINGS:

3. **Visit of PM Modi to New Zealand:** PM Modi paid an official visit to Auckland from 10-11 July 2026. It was first visit by an Indian PM to New Zealand in last 40 years. On 11 July Prime Minister Modi met with the Prime Minister Christopher Luxon at Government House in Auckland. The leaders underscored the importance of the early implementation of the India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement and also agreed to elevate the bilateral relationship to the level of Strategic Partnership. Various Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and arrangements in the fields of defense and maritime security, hydrography, sports, disaster management, dairy, tourism, maritime heritage, culture, food technology and ocean research were signed. A Joint Statement on the way forward for the bilateral partnership was also adopted by the two leaders. Prime Minister Modi, also interacted with a select group of CEOs and business leaders from New Zealand. He described the India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement as a landmark that would add depth and dynamism to the bilateral economic ties, and open new opportunities for market access, investment, services, technology and talent mobility. Prime Minister Modi encouraged businesses to expand investment and commercial partnerships and help realize the target of doubling bilateral trade to NZD 7 billion (approximately INR 35,000 crore) by 2030. Prime Minister attended a special Gala luncheon event hosted by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, themed “India-New Zealand: A Winning Partnership”. The event was attended by eminent personalities from the fields of politics, business, industry, academia, technology, sports, and the arts. Later in the evening PM Modi addressed a huge gathering of the Indian diaspora New Zealand at the “Kia Ora Modi”.
4. **Visit of PM Luxon to India:** PM Luxon paid an official visit to India from 16-20 March 2025. It was his first visit to India in his present capacity. He was the Chief Guest of the 10th Raisina Dialogue and delivered the Keynote Address. He held talks with Hon’ble PM Narendra Modi, and called on Hon’ble Rastrapatiji Smt. Droupadi Murmu on 17 March 2025. He also met EAM Dr. S

Jaishankar and Minister of Health and Family Welfare Shri J.P. Nadda. He also visited Mumbai and met Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis of Maharashtra. During the visit, New Zealand joined the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). The leaders also announced the launch of negotiations towards a balanced and mutually beneficial Free Trade Agreement in a time-bound manner and launch of negotiations on an arrangement facilitating the mobility of professionals and skilled workers. Various agreements such as MOU on Defense Cooperation, an Authorized Economic Operator - Mutual Recognition Agreement, MoC on Horticulture, Letter of Intent on Forestry, Education Cooperation Agreement and MoC in Sports were signed.

5. **Meeting of PM Modi with PM Luxon:** On 11 October 2024, PM Narendra Modi met NZ Prime Minister Christopher Luxon in Laos on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit. Their talks covered sectors such as economic cooperation, tourism, education and innovation. PM Modi and PM Luxon also had a telephonic conversation in July 2024, during which NZPM congratulated PM Modi on his party's victory in the general elections and his third term as PM.
6. **Visit of President of India to NZ:** Hon. President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu undertook a State Visit to New Zealand from 7 to 9 August 2024. She had meetings with the Governor General Cindy Kiro, Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and DPM and Foreign Minister Winston Peters and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation, specifically in areas of trade, culture, sports, defence, and traditional medicine. During the bilateral meeting with PM Luxon, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Instrument of Ratification was handed over by the NZ side. A Customs Cooperative Agreement was signed during the visit. Hon'ble President also announced opening of our Consulate in Auckland.
7. **Prime Minister Modi met New Zealand PM Chris Hipkins on 22 May 2023 on the sidelines of FIPIC-III Summit in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.** The Prime Ministers discussed various issues including parliamentary exchanges, direct air connectivity, education, culture, sports and people to people ties.

OTHER HIGH-LEVEL VISITS / MEETINGS:

8. EAM met PM Luxon on the sidelines of 20th ASEAN East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur on 27 October 2025.
9. On 29 May 2025, EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar met NZ DPM and FM Winston Peters in New Delhi during his official visit to India.
10. On 06 November 2024, EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar met NZ DPM and FM Winston Peters during 'Raisina Down Under' in Canberra. Discussions focused on India's priorities in the Indo-Pacific, and opportunities for greater collaboration.
11. New Zealand Trade & Investment Minister Todd McClay led a business delegation to India from 23 to 27 April 2026, culminating in the formal signing of the India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement with Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. He was accompanied by a New Zealand cross-party political delegation, which met with senior Indian government representatives and policy-makers to align on strategic long-term investments, visa pathways for skilled professionals, and educational agreements.

12. On 16 December 2024, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal met Todd McClay, Trade Minister of New Zealand in New Delhi. Both Ministers discussed opportunities for mutual growth, enhancing bilateral trade ties, and fostering economic cooperation to further strengthen the partnership between both nations. In the year 2025, Minister McClay and Minister Piyush Goyal met several times to advance India-New Zealand FTA talks.
13. CIM visited New Zealand from 5–8 November 2025, accompanied by a high-level business delegation comprising representatives from FICCI, CII, ASSOCHAM, and leading Indian start-ups. During the visit, Minister Goyal held discussions with New Zealand Trade Minister Todd McClay on strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties, enhancing business-to-business linkages. Both Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to elevating the India–New Zealand economic partnership. He also met Mr. McClay on the sidelines of WTO MC14.
14. MoS Pabitra Margherita visited Auckland, New Zealand from 8-10 May 2025 to attend the India-New Zealand Business Council (INZBC) event. During the visit, he called on PM Luxon, DPM-FM Winston Peters and Minister of Trade and Agriculture Todd McClay.
15. New Zealand Minister Associate Minister of Sport and Recreation Mr. Chris Bishop led a sports delegation to India to commemorate 100 years of sporting ties between New Zealand and India from 6-8 March 2026. The visit was undertaken as part of New Zealand's Sport Diplomacy Strategy 2025–2030 and aimed to strengthen bilateral relations through sport, trade, and people-to-people connections. The delegation explored opportunities for collaboration in sports development, knowledge sharing, and commercial partnerships. In addition, discussions focused on expanding trade and economic engagement, reflecting India's growing importance as a strategic partner for New Zealand. The visit reinforced the strong relationship between the two countries and supported broader efforts to deepen cooperation across sports, business, and diplomacy.

PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGES:

16. **A four-member delegation from New Zealand Parliament's South and South-East Asia Parliamentary Friendship Group** including Greg O'Connor from Labour Party and Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi, Tim Mcindoe and Melissa Lee from National Party visited New Delhi and Mumbai from 20-26 November 2019. The delegation had called on MoS for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs Shri V. Muraleedharan, Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and the Chief Election Commissioner.
17. **Visit of Lok Sabha Speaker to New Zealand:** Lok Sabha Speaker Mrs. Sumitra Mahajan led a Parliamentary delegation to New Zealand on 17-25 September 2016. Besides meetings with Speaker David Carter and interactions with New Zealand Parliamentarians, she met Acting PM Bill English.
18. **A multi-party Parliamentary Goodwill delegation from India** led by Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy, the then Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Parliamentary Affairs had visited New Zealand from 1-3 June 2015.

Institutional Dialogue Mechanisms:

19. **Foreign Ministry Consultations:** On 09 September 2025, the 6th India-NZ Foreign Ministry Consultations (FMC) took place in New Delhi. The meeting highlighted the strengthened engagement between the two countries. The discussions were led by Secretary (South) Dr. Neena Malhotra and by Mr. Grahame Morton, Deputy Secretary South and South East Asia Division, MFTA from New Zealand side.

20. **Joint Trade Committee:** The last JTC meeting was held on 26 April 2024. The talks included discussions on India-NZ trade relationship, people to people links and business presence, agricultural cooperation including horticulture, market access issues, collaboration in pharmaceuticals sector and the bilateral economic dialogue architecture.
21. **India-NZ Cyber Dialogue:** The second edition of the India-NZ Bilateral Cyber Dialogue was held on 16-17 November 2021 in virtual mode to discuss various aspects of existing bilateral cooperation in cyberspace, to exchange views on the latest developments on cyber issues at bilateral, regional, & multilateral fora and to explore initiatives to further deepen cyber cooperation. Proposal for 3rd dialogue is pending with New Zealand side.
22. **NZ-India Economic Dialogue:** The seventh round of India-NZ Economic Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 28 November, 2019. Discussions focused on current economic conditions, global economic environment, infrastructure and tax reforms.
23. **Track-1.5 Dialogue:** The 7th round of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Asia New Zealand Foundation (ANZF) track 1.5 Dialogue was held in Christchurch from January 30-31, 2025.

SECTOR-WISE COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND NZ

DEFENCE COOPERATION

24. India-NZ defence cooperation is in keeping with the overall friendly relations. **MoU on Defence Cooperation between India and New Zealand was signed in March 2025**, aimed to promote cooperation in defence strategic dialogue, defence industry, defence technology dialogue, education and training. The first **Defence Strategic Dialogue** under the MOU took place on 05 August 2025 in New Delhi. The current cooperation is characterized by exchange of officers in Staff Colleges/National Defence College, ship visits and visits by senior defence officers.

25. Rear Admiral Garin Golding, Chief of Navy for the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN), accompanied PM Luxon to India during his Official Visit in March 2025. During the visit, RAdm Garin Golding attended Raisina Dialogue. He met Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, CNS, where discussions focused on enhancing naval ties, joint training initiatives, and maritime cooperation. PM Luxon, along with RAdm Garin Golding visited the latest indigenously built destroyer of the Indian Navy, INS Surat, at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, on 20 Mar 25. The NZ Prime Minister's visit coincided with the Royal New Zealand Navy Ship HMNZS Te Kaha's visit to Mumbai from 20 to 24 Mar 2025. In addition, Cmde Rodger Ward, Commander of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, also visited HQWNC.

26. Chief of the Royal NZ Navy, Rear Admiral David Proctor, visited India from 19 to 27 February 2024. He met with Chief of the Naval Staff R. Hari Kumar in New Delhi and held discussion focusing on enhancing bilateral maritime cooperation through increased operational engagements, training exchanges, and information sharing. Earlier Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R. Hari Kumar visited NZ from 29 September to 1 October 2022, with a three-member delegation. CNS had bilateral meetings with his counterpart and other Defence authorities. An Agreement on **White Shipping Information Exchange**, was signed during this visit.

27. **The Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni**, undertaking the historic Tri-Service All-Women Circumnavigation Expedition Samudra Pradakshina, made a port call at Lyttelton, Christchurch, in

December 2025. The expedition, the first of its kind globally, comprises women officers from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force undertaking an approximately 26,000-nautical-mile voyage around the world. **INSV Tarini, an Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV)**, which was on a circumnavigation mission under Indian Navy's expedition named "Navika Sagar Parikrama-II" made a port call at Port Lyttelton from 22 December 2024 to January 4, 2025. Earlier, in a significant and historic event, **two Indian Naval Ships, INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata, made port calls in New Zealand** from 31 August to 3 September 2023, with one ship visiting Wellington and the other Auckland. This visit was particularly notable as it marked the first time in six years that Indian Naval Ships visited New Zealand.

28. Combined Task Force (CTF) 150: It is a multinational naval task force working under Combined Maritime Forces and is based in Bahrain. It has been established to monitor, board, inspect, and stop suspect shipping for safe seas and includes operations in the North Arabia Sea to support operations in the Indian Ocean. Indian Navy has committed a contribution of 5 staff members including the deputy commander to the CTF150 battle staff during the period RNZ Navy led the CTF150 from January 2025. Commodore Roger Ward and Commander Dan Crawford from Royal New Zealand Navy debriefed MOD on CTF 150 operations.

29. GOI has given concurrence to the New Zealand side for the creation of one new post of Defence Advisor in the NZHC in New Delhi.

Customs Cooperation:

30. In August 2024, India and NZ signed a **Customs Cooperative Arrangement**, aimed at enhancing trade ties and intensifying collaboration against transnational organized crime. The framework targets customs offences through initiatives such as information exchange and support for legitimate trade. It includes provisions for capacity building, expert exchanges, and mutual assistance in preventing, identifying, investigating, combating, and prosecuting customs offences. In March 2025, India and NZ signed **Authorised Economic Operator - Mutual Recognition Agreement (AEO MRA)** aimed to facilitate trade and strengthen supply chain security by mutually recognising each other's trusted traders.

International Solar Alliance

31. New Zealand ratified the International Solar Alliance and handed over the document during the state visit of our President to Wellington in August 2024.

Education:

32. Indian Students: India is the 2nd largest source of international students in NZ after China. After peaking at approximately 30,000 students in 2015, there has been a decline in this number owing to several reasons including tighter visa norms, stringent control over the quality of educational institutions, lack of job opportunities, higher cost of living, limited English skills etc. Currently, there are approximately 12,800 Indian students in NZ, pursuing higher education in various disciplines such as information technology, hospitality, science, engineering, and architecture. Currently, Indian students are facing difficulties in obtaining suitable post study work visas.

33. NZ Centre at IIT Delhi: On 11 February 2020, The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi signed an MoU with NZ universities to establish a NZ Centre at the Institute, which was inaugurated by the then DPM and Foreign Minister of NZ Winston Peters during his visit to New Delhi on 26 February, 2020. IIT Delhi and NZ universities are contributing NZ \$50,000 each to fund 10 research projects on cancer, waste management, cyber security, robotics, autonomous vehicles and medical technology, which is being done in collaboration by academics from IIT Delhi and one NZ varsity.

34. In February 2024, Education New Zealand (ENZ) furthered its commitment to India by signing two Education Cooperation Arrangements with Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) and the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad, reinforcing New Zealand's commitment to India as a key education partner. These agreements were announced during the New Zealand-India Education Connect event.

BILATERAL ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL RELATIONS

35. In the year ended March 2026 New Zealand exported \$1.21 billion of total goods and services to India and imported \$1.03 billion, representing a trade balance of \$181.86 million and a total trade value of \$2.24 billion. This represented 1.8% of all exports of total goods and services in this time period and 1.5% of imports. For trade in total goods and services India ranked 10 of 240 for highest export value, 13 of 238 for highest import value, and 11 of 243 for highest total trade value. India primarily imports fruits & nuts, wood, Aluminium and wool from NZ. Indian exports to NZ mostly are pharmaceuticals/medications, mechanical machinery, made up textile articles, Electrical Machinery and Equipment etc.

36. Bilateral Trade in the last 5 years (in US Dollars):

	Indian Imports from NZ		Total Imports	Indian Exports to NZ		Total Exports	Total Trade (US\$ billion)
	Goods	Services		Goods	Services		
2025-26*	0.50b	0.71b	1.21b	0.75b	0.28	1.03b	\$2.24b
2024-25*	0.45b	0.56b	1.01b	0.82b	0.26	1.08b	\$2.09b
2023-24*	0.46b	0.51b	0.97b	0.83b	0.27b	1.1b	\$2.07b
2022-23*	0.32b	0.52b	0.84b	0.68b	0.23b	0.91b	\$1.75b
2021-22*	0.36b	0.18b	0.54b	0.77b	0.21b	0.96b	\$1.50b

Source: Statistics NZ

*year ending March

37. On 22 December 2025, New Zealand and India concluded a landmark Free Trade Agreement. The agreement will eliminate or reduced tariffs on 95 percent of New Zealand exports, with 57 percent duty-free from day one, rising to 82 percent over time. On the other, This will **eliminate duty on 100% of Indian Exports from day one it comes into force.** NZ side has committed **investment of USD 20 billion over a period of next 15 years**, strengthening long-term economic and strategic cooperation. The agreement will provide immediate relief for key sectors including sheep meat, wool, forestry, seafood, horticulture, wine, mānuka honey, and selected dairy products, while expanding services access and protecting geographical indications. The FTA was expected to support thousands of jobs, significantly lift exports, and accelerate progress toward New Zealand’s goal of doubling export value over 10 years. PM Christopher Luxon welcomed the conclusion of the FTA and called it a landmark achievement for New Zealand. **On 27 April 2026,**Minister for Commerce and Industry Mr. Piyush Goyal and Mr McClay signed the FTA in New Delhi in front of

a large crowd of New Zealand and Indian businesspeople. NZ PM Mr. Luxon touted this as a once in a generation deal and said that the benefits of this FTA would be widespread, and NZ business community would see the doors of opportunities open to 1.4 billion people whose economy is set to become the 3rd largest in the world.

38. **Indian companies in NZ:** All major Indian IT companies are present in NZ. Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and New India Assurance have commercial operations in NZ. Indian IT giant HCL, which already has a significant presence in NZ, opened a delivery centre in Hamilton primarily to service Fonterra, one of world's biggest dairy cooperative. In 2020, it won \$ 20 million annual contract from Fonterra. Mahindra Motors, Tech Mahindra Ltd, TCS, Infosys, Dr. Reddy Laboratories and Royal Enfield Motors have presence in NZ. Mahindra Motors is significantly expanding its presence in New Zealand with 20 outlets.
39. **NZ companies in India:** Leading NZ companies having substantial business undertakings in India are Gallagher Group, which has installed security systems in the Indian Parliament, ISRO & other key locations; Sealegs that supplied amphibious motor boats to the Mumbai Police; Hamilton Jet which supplied water propulsion jet engines for the patrol boats of the Indian Coast Guard; Glidepath that supplies air cargo handling systems / conveyor belts at India's international airports and has since been purchased by French Company B2A Technology; Quality NZ, supplying high-quality seafood, meat products, fruits, wine to various five-star hotels in India; Redesign Group, involved in designing of shopping malls and other projects at major Indian international airports etc; Valocity, a real estate online aggregator platform bringing together brokers, lenders and home buyers, that was included in the top 20 financial technology companies by India Fin-tech Awards. Rakon NZ has established a manufacturing unit in Bengaluru through a joint venture with Centum Electronics Limited, specializing in telecommunications products. Their chips were used in Chandrayaan-3.

People to People ties and cultural ties:

40. The presence of large Indian diaspora in NZ and strong people-to-people linkages act as the foundation for close cultural cooperation between the two countries. All Indian festivals including Diwali, Holi, Rakshabandhan, Baisakhi, Guruparvs, Onam, Pongal, Annakut, etc. are celebrated with much enthusiasm all over NZ. There are several schools all over NZ that teach Indian traditional art forms such as Kathak and Bharatnatyam as well as contemporary Bollywood dance styles. There are several schools teaching and promoting Hindi and other Indian languages in NZ.
41. Both India and NZ enjoy close sporting links, particularly in cricket, hockey and mountaineering. In the field of mountaineering, Sir Edmund Hillary, who is considered a NZ hero, is also an iconic name in India. He served as NZ High Commissioner to India from 1985 to 1988. The first sporting link is considered when Indian Army Hockey team visited New Zealand in 1926. The team comprised Major Dhyanchand and won 18 matches out of 21 played.
42. There are 292,092 persons of Indian ethnicity (as per Census 2023) in NZ. Around 70,000 persons are estimated to be Indian passport holders. Out of all these, 35,000 persons are estimated to be of Fijian-Indian descent. Hindi (77,985) is the fifth most spoken language in NZ after English, Maori (213,849), Samoan (110,541) and Mandarin (107,412). They are mainly engaged in professional activities including as doctors, professors, engineers, chartered accountants and computer experts. Many are also engaged in grocery and food distribution business, dairy farming and as cab drivers. There are Indian Associations in all major towns, which help the community nurture its cultural heritage.
43. **High retail crime:** A number of Indians are owners of small retail businesses or they work in them. In the last few years, there have been instances of ram-raids on dairies owned by Indians or attacks

on Indians working in dairies. Last year, a robbery at a jewellery store in Auckland resulted in serious injuries to a member of Indian diaspora.

44. Opening of Consulate in Auckland: The new Consulate in Auckland became operational from September 5, 2024.

July 2026