
Brief on India-Bolivia Bilateral Relations

- India and Bolivia enjoy friendly and cordial relations. The bilateral exchanges, trade and investment are modest but the potential for increasing cooperation is substantial. Both desire to improve the level of engagement and forge partnerships in sectors like lithium, mining, infrastructure development, health & pharmaceuticals, traditional systems of medicine, Information Technology, Space, capacity building and development cooperation.

Opening of a new resident Mission in La Paz, Bolivia on 17 September, 2024:

- Shri Rohitkumar R. Vadhvana (IFS 2010 batch) assumed charge on 19 March, 2025.
- Earlier, since April 1981, Embassy of India in Lima was concurrently accredited to Bolivia

Bilateral Meetings and Visits:

- **Meeting of PM Narendra Modi with President Luis Arce Catacora of Bolivia on 7 July, 2025, Rio de Janeiro, in the sidelines of BRICS:**
- First ever bilateral meeting between the two HOGs.
- Discussed cooperation in critical minerals, trade & investment, health and pharmaceuticals, training and capacity building, infrastructure and development cooperation.
- PM Modi thanked Bolivia for the solidarity extended to India in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack.

From India to Bolivia:

First State Visit of President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind to Santa Cruz, Bolivia (28-30 March, 2019):

- Eight bilateral Agreements/MoUs were signed during the visit.
- Bolivia also signed the Framework Agreement of ISA and its ratification is now complete.
- President was personally received by the then President Evo Morales on arrival in Santa Cruz.
- President Kovind was conferred the highest civilian award of Bolivia 'Order of the Condor of the Andes' in the degree of Grand Collar.
- He was also presented with the key of Santa Cruz city.

Visit of MOS Pabitra Margherita to Bolivia (November 2025)

- Hon'ble MOS Pabitra Margherita led 3 member delegation comprising of Joint Secretary (South America) Dr. Prafullachandra Sharma and Director (MOS-PM) Shri Vipul Mesariya to represent GoI in the inauguration ceremony of the new President of Bolivia Mr. Rodrigo Pereira Paz. During the visit, Hon'ble MOS inaugurated the new Chancery building and India House; held meetings with ITEC alumni, Cultural groups, Indian diaspora, businesses and also launched the celebration of 150 years of Vande Mataram in La Paz. Hon'ble MOS paid tributes to the Mahatma Gandhi bust in Mallasa Park and also planted a sapling under the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam initiative.

Visit of a delegation led by Dr. K. M. Praphullachandra Sharma, Joint Secretary (South America Division), Ministry of External Affairs during 3-8 August, 2025:

- The 3-member delegation, led by Dr. K. M. Praphullachandra Sharma, comprised of Mr. Rohan Das, Director, Geological Survey of India (GSI) and Mr. M. Jayapal Reddy, Executive Director, National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC).
- The delegation participated in the bicentenary celebrations in Sucre on 5-6 August,

2025.

- During the visit, JS (SA) called on Hon'ble President of Bolivia H.E. Luis Alberto Arce Catacora and Hon'ble Vice President of Bolivia H.E. David Choquehuanca Céspedes in Sucre, and extended warm greetings on behalf of President of India, Prime Minister of India and People of India on the Bicentenary celebration of Bolivia.
- Bilateral meetings were held with the Mayor of Santa Cruz, Mr. Max Jhonny Fernández Saucedo, Acting Governor of Santa Cruz, Mr. Mario Joaquín Aguilera Cirbian and Minister of Hydrocarbons and Energy, Mr. Alejandro Gallardo.

Visit of MOS Meenakashi Lekhi to Bolivia (January 2023):

- The then MOS for External Affairs Mrs Meenakashi Lekhi paid an official visit to Bolivia and held bilateral meeting with the then Foreign Minister Rogelio Mayta. Discussions were held on various bilateral, regional and multilateral affairs. *This was the first ever visit from the Ministry of External Affairs to Bolivia*

Visit of NITI Aayog representatives to Bolivia (October 2019):

- Dr. V.K. Saraswat, Member of NITI Aayog led a five-member delegation to Bolivia from 10-13 October 2019.
- During the visit, the delegation held comprehensive technical discussions at the Bolivian Ministry of Energy with Vice Minister of High Energy Technologies Mr Luis Alberto Echazú Alvarado, Managing Director of State-owned YLB Corporation (Yacimientos de Litio Boliviano- Bolivian Lithium Deposits), Juan Carlos Montenegro and other experts.
- The team also visited YLB plants and evaporation ponds at Salar de Uyuni.

Visit of MOS (Railways) Shri Rajen Gohain to Bolivia (April 2018):

- Hon'ble MOS (Railways) Shri Rajen Gohain paid an official visit to Bolivia from 20-21 April 2018. *This was the first Ministerial visit from India to Bolivia.*

From Bolivia to India:

Visit of Bolivian Vice President, Mr. Edmand Lara to India (February 2026)

- Bolivia's Vice President, Mr. Edmand Lara travelled to India during 17-21 February 2026 to participate in the AI Impact Summit in New Delhi.
- He was accompanied by Vice Minister of Science & Technology, Mr. Omar Alfredo Penalzoza Escalera, and two other officials.
- During the visit, the delegation met the Hon'ble Vice President, Director of ICAR and visited the Pusa Institute of Technology, New Delhi.

Visit of Bolivian Foreign Minister Ms Celinda Sosa Lunda to India (March 2025):

- Bolivia's Foreign Minister Ms Celinda Sosa Lunda paid an official visit to New Delhi on 20-21 March 2025 to participate in the 10th edition of CII-LAC Conclave.
- She met with EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar and held discussions on various bilateral issues.
- Both Ministers also signed an MoU on Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), on 20 March, 2025.
- Also, during the visit, India's Minister of Culture & Tourism of India, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Bolivian FM signed a Cultural Exchange Program for 2025-2027 on 20 March, 2025.

Visit of Bolivia's Minister of Development Planning to India (August 2023 & March 2016):

- The then Bolivian Minister of Development Planning Mr Sergio Cusicanqui visited India from 3-5 August 2023 to participate in the 9th CII-LAC Business Conclave. Earlier Minister had visited India in March 2016.

Visit of Defence Minister to India (March 2016):

- The then Bolivian Defence Minister Reymi Ferreira participated in Defexpo India in March 2016. This was the first time a Bolivian Defence Minister attended the event.

MEETINGS ON THE SIDELINES OF VARIOUS FORUMS:

- At an outreach event organized by host Brazil during the BRICS Summit in July 2014, Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi along with other BRICS leaders interacted with the Presidents of South American countries, including Bolivia.
- EAM Dr S Jaishankar met Bolivian Foreign Minister Ms Celinda Sosa Lunda in January 2024 at Uganda on the sidelines of NAM Summit.
- EAM Dr S Jaishankar again had a meeting with Bolivian Foreign Minister Ms Celinda Sosa Lunda in September 2024 on the margins of UNGA, New York. Discussions focused on bilateral relations as well as Bolivia's aspiration to become a member of BRICS.
- EAM Dr S Jaishankar met the then FM of Bolivia Rogelio Matya in New York on the sidelines of the 77th UNGA in September 2022.
- EAM Dr S Jaishankar met with the then Foreign Minister of Bolivia Rogelio Mayta on 05 August 2021 in Tehran, on the sidelines of inauguration ceremony of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi.
- EAM Dr S Jaishankar had a meeting with the then Foreign Minister Diego Pary Rodriguez (26 September 2018) in New York on the sidelines of 73rd UNGA.

BILATERAL INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS:

Joint Commission Mechanism (JCM):

- A Memorandum of Understanding to establish Joint Commission at Vice Minister/Secretary level was signed on 6 February, 2025 at La Paz, by the then Ambassador Shri Vishwas Sapkal and Bolivian Foreign Minister Ms Celinda Sosa Lunda. Indian Embassy in Lima was concurrently accredited to Bolivia at that time.

Joint Working Group (JWG) on Minerals:

- An MOU on Cooperation in Geology and Mineral Resources was signed on 29 March 2019. The first meeting of JWG was held on 07 April 2022 (in virtual format). The second meeting of JWG was held on 09 June 2023 (in virtual format).
- The meeting was headed by Dr. Veena Kumar, JS (Mines) from the Indian side and DG (Planning) of the Ministry of Mining and Metallurgy on the Bolivian side. The MoU has expired in March 2024. An extension protocol to renew the MoU was signed between Amb Rohit Vadhvana and the then FM of Bolivia Ms. Celinda Sosa Lunda in October 2025 to further extend it from March 2024 to March 2029.

Joint Working Group (JWG) on Traditional Medicine:

- An MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy was signed on 29 March 2019, in Bolivia, during the visit of Hon'ble Shri Ram Nath Kovind, the then President of India.
- Thereafter, Ministry of AYUSH held the 1st virtual meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) with the Health & Sports Ministry of Bolivia on 12 October 2021. Bolivian side was advised to share a proposal on scientific study to evaluate medicinal value of coca leaves. The 2nd meeting of the JWG was held on 17 February 2023.
- The Loyola University, a private university in La Paz, in cooperation with Ministry of AYUSH, has from 2026 started offering a Diploma in Ayurveda for Bolivian students.

Joint Working Group (JWG) on Space Cooperation:

- An MoU was signed between ISRO and ABE on Cooperation in the exploration and the use of outer space for peaceful purposes during the State Visit of the then President in March 2019. The first meeting of JWG was held on 15 September 2020.

ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS:

- The trade between India and Bolivia is modest but has potential to grow, and there is scope for improvement.

- There is a desire on both sides to improve the level of engagement and forge partnerships in sectors like lithium, mining, infrastructure development, health & pharmaceuticals, traditional systems of medicine, Information Technology, Space, capacity building and development cooperation.
- The two countries are exploring commercial tie-ups for supply of Bolivia's lithium carbonate and production of lithium-ion battery products.
- Trade of India-Bolivia as per Ministry of Commerce & Industry, India statistics:

(Figures in USD Millions)

SN	Bilateral Trade	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-26
1.	India's Export to Bolivia	94.33	117.95	77.34	71.41	70.12	55.99
2.	%Growth		25.04	-34.43	-7.67	-1.81	-20.15
3.	India's Import from Bolivia	1,159.14	2072.54	2,550.21	1,087.33	369.46	1257.81
4.	%Growth		78.80	23.05	-57.36	-66.02	240.44%
5.	Total Trade	1,253.47	2,190.49	2,627.55	1,158.74	439.58	1313.80
6.	%Growth		74.75	19.95	-55.9	-62.06	198.88
7.	Trade Balance	-1,064.81	-1,954.58	-2,472.87	-1,015.92	-299.34	-1201.82

(Source: <https://www.commerce.gov.in/trade-statistics/>)

- **India's Export:** India's main exports to the Bolivia include automobiles, pharmaceuticals, machinery, rubber & plastic products, organic chemicals, manufacturing, vegetable products, metal products, textiles & fibers, iron & steel, aluminium waste and scrap, *Lac, gums, resins and other vegetable saps and extracts*.
- **India's Import:** The main imports from the Bolivia to India are precious stones and metals, manufactured materials related to construction and other industries, mineral products, machinery aluminium waste and scrap, wood, leather, textiles and organic chemicals.
- **Investment and Indian companies:** Investment by Indian companies in Bolivia is moderate. Companies like Brawn Laboratories, Protech Biosystems Group and Gajraj International function on a small scale.
- Altimin, a Hyderabad based company has MOU with YLB and is actively working in Lithium though it does not have local office in Bolivia.
- Indian investment by Jindal Steel & Power Limited to develop El Mutun, iron ore and steel plan, was terminated in July 2012.
- Bajaj Auto, Hero Motors, TVS and Mahindra & Mahindra have local dealerships in Bolivia.

Other Areas Cooperation:

- **Cooperation in Lithium industry:** Bolivia has world's largest lithium reserves estimated to be 23 million tonnes but industrial scale production has not started yet. The country is currently able to produce over 550 tonnes of lithium carbonate in a year

from pilot plants.

- Bolivia is presently concentrated on developing lithium exploration and extraction at three locations - Salar de Uyuni, Coi Pasa and Pastos Grandes, using the Direct Lithium Extraction Technology (DLE) with technology partners. It was inaugurated in December 2023 by President Luis Arce. The plant is designed to produce 15,000 metric tons per year. However, currently it operates at 15% capacity.
- The US\$130 million Lithium Carbonate (Li_2CO_3) Plant of 15,000 tonnes production capacity, which has been under construction since 2019-2020 at Lilipi in Salar de Uyuni, is expected to commence production soon.
- Bolivian authorities have expressed interest in working with Government PSUs and private sector companies of India in this sector.
- **Visit of KABIL team (2019):** In 2019, Bolivian Government invited India to be their partner in lithium sector. Energy Ministry and State-owned YLB Corporation expressed willingness to supply lithium carbonate to India and sought a proposal from Indian industry for creation of a joint venture company with YLB Corporation for cathode material and battery manufacturing in India. A three-member KABIL team visited Bolivia from 3-5 February 2019 to explore opportunities.
- **Signing of MoU between ALTMIN and YLB Bolivia:** On 11 November 2023, Hyderabad based Cathode Active Materials company, Altmin, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with YLB Bolivia for sourcing Lithium Carbonate.

Cooperation in the field of Space:

- An MoU was signed between ISRO and ABE on Cooperation in the exploration and the use of outer space for peaceful purposes in March 2019. Two officials of ABE attended UNNATI, a nano satellite training programme from 15 Oct. - 15 Dec. 2019 at ISRO, Bangalore. Both sides had subsequently shared the Points of Contact (POCs). The first meeting of JWG was held on 15 September 2020.
- **Bi-Oceanic Railway Integration Corridor Project:** The Bi-oceanic Railway Integration Corridor would link Brazilian port Santos with Peruvian port Ilo through Bolivia. For this project, Ministry of Railways is the nodal point on Indian side. Indian side is awaiting detailed proposals from Bolivian side. The project is estimated to cost US\$ 7.35 billion for developing railway line in Peru and Bolivia. Bolivian Government welcomed India's participation in the project.
- An MoU on Cooperation regarding Bi-Oceanic Railway Integration Corridor Project was signed between the two countries during the State Visit of the then Indian President, on 23 March 2019, to Bolivia. Ministry of Railways is the nodal point on Indian side.

Cooperation in Education sector:

- University to university collaboration has been established between Ahmedabad University with UTEPSA (Universidad Tecnológica Privada de Santa Cruz) University in Santa Cruz for academic and institutional cooperation.

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO BOLIVIA:

- Bolivia is a beneficiary of India's development assistance and is keen to make India its development partner. India extended humanitarian assistance to Bolivia. In 2011, India gave a cash contribution of US\$ 200,000 to Bolivia as a relief measure in the wake of floods in the north and central regions.
- In 2008, US \$ 100,000 was provided as cash assistance in response to floods caused by La-Niña phenomenon. In 2007, India had gifted medicines worth US\$ 200,000 as humanitarian aid in the wake of landslides in Bolivia.
- A medical aid-package comprising 6.2 tonnes of critical medicines, including 300,000 Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) tablets and protective gear was gifted to Bolivia in

August 2020 to combat Covid-19 pandemic.

- India provided humanitarian assistance to Bolivia in two phases i.e. during the incident of devastating Amazon fires and floods.
- The first tranche of HADR items, consisting of firefighting Equipment and rehabilitation items was formally handed over by Ambassador of India Mr. Shri Vishwas Sapkal on 06 February 2025 and the second tranche by Ambassador Rohit Vadhwana on 26 April, 2025 (~15 tons of essential supplies)

Donation of MR vaccines by India:

- On 21 July, 2025, Ambassador Rohit Vadhwana formally handed over a consignment of 300,000 doses of MR (Measles and Rubella) vaccines including the essential supplies needed for their administration at El Alto Airport, La Paz. The reception was attended by Foreign Minister Ms Celinda Sosa Lunda (FMC); Minister of Health and Sports, Ms. María René Castro Quisicanqui (HSM) and Vice Minister Dr. Max Enriquez Nava from the Bolivian side
- To combat Amazon forest fires, Mission sent a proposal to the Ministry for providing assistance to Bolivia via 'satellite imagery', to which SA Division has responded positively. Contact person detail from Bolivia has been shared to take this forward.

Tiwanaku Archaeological Site Project Phase I:

- A project involving lighting of Tiwanaku Archaeological Site on the shores of Lake Titicaca was completed with the assistance of Government of India, with a budget of US\$ 31,000 under the "Aid to LAC", budget. India's involvement in this project was a gesture of great goodwill and garnered significant appreciation.
- **Other projects involving assistance by India:** India extended support for financing a rural water management project in Beni Province of Bolivia under IBSA fund.
- A project involving solar lighting of Plazuela del Niño (Children's Park) with GoI assistance of US\$ 62,880 under 'Aid to LAC', was completed at Sucre.
- A US\$ 1mn project on social innovation hubs for laboral insertion and early childcare under the India-UNDP Fund was successfully completed from 2020-2022. It created infrastructure, capacity and skills, and contributed to gender equality and women empowerment.

Centre of Excellence in Information Technology:

- The Agreement between India and Bolivia for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Information and Communication Technologies (CENETIC) was signed in March 2019.

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES:

- **ITEC and other courses:** ITEC slots for Bolivia was doubled to 10 during the visit of Hon'ble President of India to Bolivia in March 2019. Courses under ITEC programme are becoming popular among Bolivians. In 2025, seven ITEC slots were utilized by Bolivian candidates. So far in total 60 Bolivian nationals attended the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. A number of ITEC alumni (around 8) from Bolivia participated in ITEC Day celebrations in November 2025.
- **Course for Bolivian Diplomats:** Two Bolivian diplomats have participated in the Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD), and another one in the 4th Global South Young Diplomats in 2025.

CULTURAL RELATIONS:

- **Unveiling of Nataraj statue in Sucre on 27 September, 2025:** A statue of Nataraj, the cosmic dancer and eternal symbol of India's ancient cultural heritage, was unveiled at the Ambassadors' Walk in Sucre by the Ambassador Rohit Vadhwana, with the Hon'ble Mayor of Sucre, Dr. Enrique Leña Palenque.
- The Ambassadors' Walk stands as a testament to global unity and friendship, where flags

and cultural symbols offered by nations with diplomatic presence in Bolivia are displayed as gifts to the people of Sucre.

- The installation of Nataraj, representing creation, preservation, and transformation, lends a profound spiritual essence to the walkway. *[A bronze statue is commissioned by ICCR for this purpose. Currently Mission has installed a locally made statue, till the time we receive a bronze statue.]*
- **Navratri celebrations in Bolivia:** Garba-Dandia events were organised in three cities of Bolivia, namely, Cochabamba, Oruro and La Paz.
- **Hindi Diwas (14 September) and Vishwa Hindi Diwas (10 January):** Mission celebrated Hindi Diwas and Vishwa Hindi Diwas with participation of language enthusiasts. Hindi songs and dance performances were presented. Mission has started free Hindi classes (virtually).
- **Bollywood Movies:** Embassy is organising Bollywood Movies dubbed in Spanish language in various cities of Bolivia.
- **Other Cultural events:** Embassy participated in various events organised by local authorities, including in Pedestrian Day on 7 September, Cultural Event of MoFA on 13 September, Gastronomy event '**Sabores Del Mundo 2025**' by Municipality of La Paz on 4 October, etc.
- **Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in La Paz (2 October, 2025):** Embassy organized its first ever ceremony to celebrate the birth Anniversary of Gandhiji at Mallasa Park in presence of Vice Mayor of Mallasa and senior dignitaries from the Municipality of La Paz. Ambassador authored an article which was published in 4 leading Bolivian newspapers. A tree planting drive was organised under the campaign '*EkPedMaaKeNaam*'. Famous Andean music group "WARA" played a video recording of "*Vaishnava Jana*" song, in their Concert at the Alberto Saavedra Pérez Municipal Theatre, a historic theatre of La Paz.
- **Mahatma Gandhi busts in Bolivia:** Presently, there are two busts of Mahatma Gandhi in Bolivia, one in La Paz (installed on 31 August 2021) and the other in Santa Cruz. The celebrations of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi were held in Bolivia with the rendition of 'Vaishnav Jan To' bhajan by a popular Andean Group 'WARA'. ICCR has provided 3 more Gandhi busts which will be installed in due course.

Cultural Exchange Program 2025-27:

- During the visit of Foreign Minister of Bolivia Ms Celinda Sosa Lunda signed a Cultural Exchange Program for 2025-2027 on 20 March, 2025 with India's Minister of Culture & Tourism of India, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- A 3-member cultural troupe from India, led by Pandit Debajit Chakraborty, sitar player, will be visiting Bolivia from 4-9 August, 2025 to participate in the Bicentenary celebrations in Sucre and also to perform in other cities.
- **Yoga Day Celebrations:** Several yoga sessions have been organised by the Embassy at various locations including Isla del Sol (Sun Island), Tiwanaku, Cochabamba and La Paz.
- **Indian Festivals celebrations:** Embassy of India in Bolivia organized a Holi event in collaboration with the Dil Deewana group on 8 April and Janmashtami on 24 August, 2025. Over 100 Bolivians participated in the event. Diwali was celebrated in La Paz and Cochabamba.

CONSULAR & COMMUNITY ISSUES:

- **Visa application procedure for Indians:** India is in the Group-II countries. Visa application form needs to be submitted online approximately 20 days before the expected travel date. So, it neither falls within a "visa on arrival" category nor "e-visa" category. Hence, we advise all Indians to take a visa in India before traveling to Bolivia.

- **Visa Exemption Agreement for diplomatic and official passports:** A Visa Exemption Agreement for diplomatic and official passports was signed during the State Visit of the then President in March 2019. The Agreement came into force on 29 June 2019. India has extended e-Visa facility to Bolivians with effect from 5 August 2015.
- **Indian Community in Bolivia:** Indian community in Bolivia, including PIOs, is small in number, i.e. around 60 as per data available with Mission.

MEDIA INTERACTION:

Mission has organized three Media Symposiums: In La Paz in October 2025; in Santa Cruz in February 2026 and in Cochabamba in March 2026. In these, India was introduced to senior media representatives through presentations and discussions on India's economic growth, Digital Technologies and innovation in India, agriculture, mining, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, etc.

June, 2026