
INDIA – NEW ZEALAND BILATERAL BRIEF

1. India and New Zealand(NZ) 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 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 PM Narendra Modi, and called on 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.
4. **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.

5. **Visit of President of India to NZ:** Rashtrapatiji 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. New Zealand ratified the **International Solar Alliance** and handed over the document during the state visit of our President to Wellington in August 2024.
6. 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.

OTHER HIGH-LEVEL VISITS / MEETINGS:

7. EAM met PM Luxon on the sidelines of 20th ASEAN East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur on 27 October 2025.
8. On 29 May 2025, EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar met NZ DPM and FM Winston Peters in New Delhi during his official visit to India.
9. 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.

PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGES:

10. Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla in March 2026 constituted a 11-member **Parliamentary Friendship Group for New Zealand** in our Parliament.
11. A four-member delegation from New Zealand Parliament's South and South-East Asia Parliamentary Friendship Group visited New Delhi and Mumbai from 20-26 November 2019.
12. Lok Sabha Speaker Mrs. Sumitra Mahajan led a Parliamentary delegation to New Zealand on 17-25 September 2016.
13. 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:

14. **Foreign Ministry Consultations:** On 09 September 2025, the 6th India-NZ Foreign Ministry Consultations (FMC) took place in New Delhi. 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.
15. **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.
16. **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 and to explore initiatives to further deepen cyber cooperation.
17. **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.
18. **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

19. 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.

20. 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 and met Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, CNS. 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.

21.Chief of the Royal NZ Navy, Rear Admiral David Proctor, visited India from 19 to 27 February 2024. 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.

22. **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 comprises women officers from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force undertaking an approximately 26,000-nautical-mile voyage around the world. 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.

23. **Combined Task Force (CTF) 150:** It is a multinational naval task force working under Combined Maritime Forces and is based in Bahrain. Indian Navy contributed 5 staff members including the deputy commander to the CTF150 battle staff during the period RNZ Navy led the CTF150 from January-June 2025.

BILATERAL ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL RELATIONS

24. 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.

25. 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)
	Good s	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

26. **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, New Zealand 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. On 27 April 2026, CIM Shri Piyush Goyal and Mr McClay signed the FTA in New Delhi.**

27. 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. HCL, Mahindra Motors, Tech Mahindra Ltd, TCS, Infosys, Dr. Reddy Laboratories and Royal Enfield Motors have presence in NZ.

28. NZ companies in India: Leading NZ companies having substantial business undertakings in India are Gallagher Group, Sealegs, Hamilton Jet, Glidepath, Quality NZ, Redesign Group, Valocity. Rakon NZ has established a manufacturing unit in Bengaluru through a JV with Centum Electronics Limited, specializing in telecommunications products. Their chips were used in Chandrayaan-3.

29. **Customs Cooperation:** In August 2024, India and NZ signed a **Customs Cooperative Arrangement**, aimed at enhancing trade ties and intensifying collaboration against transnational organized crime. 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.

Education:

30. India is the 2nd largest source of international students in NZ. Currently, there are approximately 8,000 Indian students in NZ, pursuing higher education in various disciplines such as IT, hospitality, science, engineering, and architecture.

31. **NZ Centre at IIT Delhi:** On 11 February 2020, IIT Delhi signed an MoU with NZ universities to establish a NZ Centre at the Institute. 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.

32. 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.

People to People ties and cultural ties:

33. 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.

34. 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.

35. There are 292,092 persons of Indian ethnicity 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.

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

June 2026