

High Commission of India

Suva

India-Tuvalu

Bilateral Relations

Bilateral relations between India and Tuvalu have been growing steadily since the reopening of the High Commission of India in Suva in 1999.

Tuvalu was one of the 34 Co-sponsors of G-4's draft resolution on UNSC reform in 2005. Tuvalu supported India's candidature for the position of Commonwealth Secretary General election held in Kampala in November 2007.

As a historical first Ministerial visit from India to Tuvalu, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Hon'ble Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare visited Tuvalu on 11 March 2018 and had interactions with all the important dignitaries of the country including the Prime Minister and the Governor General of Tuvalu.

The Forum for India-Pacific Island Countries Summit (FIPIC-I): Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hosted the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC-I) in Suva (Fiji) during his visit on 19 November 2014 with the participation of 14 Pacific countries. Tuvalu delegation, led by the Governor-General Sir Italeli Iakoba, attended the Summit.

The Forum for India-Pacific Island Countries Summit (FIPIC-II): A Tuvalu delegation led by Prime Minister Hon. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, visited India to attend 2nd Summit of Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC-II) held at Jaipur on 21 August 2015.

The Forum for India-Pacific Island Countries Summit (FIPIC-III): A Tuvalu delegation led by Prime Minister Hon. Kausea Natano, visited PNG to attend 3rd Summit of Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC-II) held at Port Moresby on 22 May 2023.

India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPI-SDC): Under the umbrella of FIPIC, Government of India organized the India-Pacific Islands Sustainable Development Conference (IPI-SDC) which was held at Suva, Fiji on 25-26 May 2017. Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. (Dr.) V.K.Singh (Retd.) hosted the event. Mr. Maatia Toafa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Tuvalu led the Tuvalu delegation for IPI-SDC.

International Solar Alliance (ISA) : Tuvalu is a founder member of ISA and deposited the Instrument of Ratification at New Delhi on 25 September 2017. Hon. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu led the country's delegation to the ISA Founding Conference and Solar Summit which was held in New Delhi on 11 March 2018.

Hon. Kitiona Tausi, Minister for Trade and Fisheries, Government of Tuvalu attended the 6th Assembly of the ISA in New Delhi from 28 Oct-03 Nov 2023.

Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS): On 12 January 2023, the Tuvaluan Minister for Finance and Climate Change, Seve Paeniu, represented the country in the Environment Ministers' Session at VoSS held virtually.

Tuvalu General Elections: One of the smallest countries in the world, Tuvalu went to polls on 26 January 2024. Two of the 24 candidates in the Tuvalu elections including Seve Paeniu Finance Minister and contender for the top post were elected unopposed. Over 6,000 people registered to cast their votes in eight constituencies in the country, with two seats allocated to each. Incumbent Tuvaluan Prime Minister Kausea Natano lost his parliamentary seat in the general election. The newly elected parliament will choose the country's new prime minister from its 16 lawmakers. With Natano's defeat, the main claimants for the top post are Finance Minister Seve Paeniu and former Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga. Tuvalu is presently under a care taker government.

Visits from Tuvalu:

- 1) Rt. Hon. Sir Kamuta Latasi, Speaker of Parliament, Tuvalu, visited India to attend 20th Conference of Commonwealth Speakers in New Delhi from 4-8 January, 2010.
- 2) Mr. Mainagar Taope, Manager, Tuvalu Cooperative Society visited India to participate in the Chefs-de-Mission seminar held at New Delhi from 8-12 March, 2010.
- 3) The Queen's Baton Relay (QBR) for the Commonwealth Games held in New Delhi in October 2010 passed through Tuvalu from 29-30 May, 2010.
- 4) A delegation led by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taukelina Finikaso visited India in August 2013 for the commissioning of the new Tuvalu Consulate office in New Delhi. Tuvalu delegation, led by Fauoa Maani, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, 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.
- 5) Hon Samuela Penitala Teo, Special Envoy for Disaster, attended the First Asian Ministerial Disaster Risk Reduction Conference, in New Delhi from 2- 5 November 2016.
- 6) H.E. Sir Iakoba T Italeli, Governor General attended 17th International Conference of Chief Justice, held in Lucknow from 9-15 November 2016. He attended the 18th International Conference of Chief Justice, held in Lucknow from 8-14 November 2017.
- 7) Tuvalun PM Hon. Enele Sosene Sopoaga had a bilateral meeting with Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the ISA Conference.
- 8) Hon. Mr. Isaia Vaipuna Taape, Minister for Health, Social Welfare and Gender Affairs, along with Permanent Secretary and Deputy Secretary visited New Delhi on 29 May 2022. The delegation was invited by the Fortis Hospitals Limited, Gurugram, to visit their facility and meet with senior management on their treatment and services offered to patients from Tuvalu. Government of Tuvalu is presently working with Fortis Hospital (India) to set-up a 5-bedded dialysis centre in Tuvalu as part of ongoing efforts to locally serve the growing number of renal patients. A meeting with our Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya was also arranged during his visit.
- 9) Tuvalu's Advisor to the Prime Minister and Special Envoy for the Commonwealth and Oceans and Climate Change, Ambassador Shivshankar Nair visited India from 11 to 13 September 2022. During the visit Amb. Nair met with Secretary (West), Shri Sanjay Verma, JS (Oceania) Mrs. Paramita Tripathi, JS (Indo-Pacific), Mrs. Geetika Srivastava and JS (East Asia), Dr. Shilpak Ambule.
- 10) Hon. Kitona Tausi, Minister for Trade and Fisheries, Government of Tuvalu attended the 6th Assembly of the ISA in New Delhi from 28 Oct-03 Nov 2023.

Cooperation at International Forums: Recently Tuvalu supported Indian candidatures at various international forums:

- Tuvalu gave verbal support to India's candidature to the Mr. Abdulla Shahid, Foreign Minister of Maldives for the Presidency of 76th UNGA, elections for which were held in New York on 3 June 2021.
- Tuvalu supported India's candidate, Professor Dr. Bimal Prasad, to the International Law Commission (ILC) for the term 2023-27, elections for which were held in New York on 12 November 2021.
- Tuvalu supported India's re-election to the Council of IMO in Category 'B' for the term 2022-23 on 9 November 2021
- Tuvalu gave verbal support for India's "Observer Status" for International Solar Alliance at the 76 Session of UNGA.
- Tuvalu supported India's candidature to the Governing Council (GC) of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) for the term 2022-25 on 23 May 2022.
- India's candidature to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf for a five-year term beginning 2023 election held on 13-17 June 2022 in New York.

Indian Assistance: India has given assistance of US\$ 275,122 for construction of three Government buildings in Tuvalu in November 2017. India has also provided airfares (US\$ 35,767) for six-member Tuvalu delegation to COP23 held in Bonn, Germany in November 2017. India has also provided a grant of AUS 10,000 (US\$ 7837) for holding SME Trade fair in Tuvalu in November 2017. India has also given AU\$ 18,705 (US\$ 14662) for tickets of advance CHOGM Team to London. India is also giving AU\$ 48000(US\$ 37625) for airfares of 8-member delegation of Tuvalu to CHOGM London.

Earlier, GOI announced US\$ 100,000 Grant-aid to all Pacific Island countries during the Post Forum Dialogue partner meeting in 2006 and during the subsequent years (US\$ 125,000 since 2009). The Grant has been used for providing computers and medicines & medical equipment for the Princess Margaret Hospital, the only Government hospital situated in its Capital Funafuti in September 2007 and March 2009 respectively at a total cost of US \$ 116,712.

GOI contributed US\$ 100,000 to the Government of Tuvalu in February 2012 for storage, supply and management of water following the severe drought in Tuvalu. Two chain-saws were supplied in 2012. GOI had provided funds for supply of a lawn-mower and a grass cutter in March 2013. Supply of medical/dental equipment to Princess Margaret Hospital and procurement of office equipment for the Lofeagai Community Church, are under consideration of GOI. The GOI approved funds for purchase of new ambulance for Princess Margaret Hospital, Funafuti in September 2014 and purchase of medical equipment for Princess Margaret Hospital, Funafuti in October 2014.

Government of India funded Tuberculosis medicine handed over to Tuvalu Government in April 2022 and in July 2023.

In August 2023, under the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, Government of India has allocated US\$700,000 towards a crucial water storage initiative in the only public school, the 'Motufoua Secondary School' in Tuvalu.

Major Assistance for Pacific Islands Forum Summit 2019: Tuvalu hosted the 50th Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Summit in Tuvalu on 13-16 August 2019. India has approved US\$ 1.92 mn special grant assistance to Government of Tuvalu on 28 November 2018 as contribution towards construction of Tuvalu Convention Centre for hosting the PIF Summit. The amount has been disbursed in phased manner.

India-Pacific Islands Developing States (PSIDS) Leaders' Meeting held in New York on 24 September 2019: During the meeting held at New York, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi announced US\$12 million grant (US\$1 million to each PSIDS). Subsequently, Tuvalu was granted US\$ 1 million, out of which they have utilized US\$370,353 for strategic response to Covid-19 pandemic, under the India-UNDP Fund.

Solar Electrification Project: The GOI's US\$ 1.5mn flagship project of 'solar electrification of 2800 houses in 14 PICs' kick-started on 15 August 2016 with a one-month refresher training of 43 Solar Mamas from seven PICs at the Centre for Advanced Training and Development (CATD), Nadave, Tailevu, Fiji. GOI will be doing solar-electrification of 200 houses in Tuvalu. Six solar-mamas have completed their six-month long training at the Barefoot College, Rajasthan in September 2017.

Solarisation of Head of State Residences: A regional Solarisation Project to improve resilience in the Pacific was signed on 1 June 2020 in Suva between United Nations Resident Coordinator and Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF). The two-year project, costing US\$1.31 mn has been largely funded by Government of India – US\$ 400,000 from UN Development Partnership Fund and US\$700,000 from India-UN Development Partnership Fund Commonwealth Window. Under the project, Photovoltaic (PV) systems will be installed on buildings of national significance, such as the executive administrative residence of 11 countries (Fiji, Federated States Micronesia, Palau, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu). Tuvalu is one of the five countries to have endorsed the requisite MoU with PIDF Secretariat for the project and five consent for site feasibility assessments and progress to system design, detail specification for procurement and implementation. The project has completed in Tuvalu and Photo voltaic (PV) systems have been installed at the Governor General's official residence in January 2024.

Human Resource Development: Four officials from Tuvalu availed of training facilities under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme in 2012-13 and seven officials in 2013-14. Out of 15 allotted, 8 slots were utilized in 2014-15. Four slots have been utilized out of 10 allotted for the year 2015-16. 3 slots were utilized out of 10 offered in 2017-18. 3 slots were utilized out of 10 offered in 2018-19. 1 slot was utilized out of 3 offered in 2019-20. All Three slots were unutilized in 2020-21 & 2021-22 primarily owing to the prevailing Covid situation.

In 2022-23 only one slot has been utilised till date out of 6.

Under the ICCR's General Scholarship Scheme (GSS), five slots have been allotted for Tuvalu for 2021-2022. Three students from Tuvalu availed of ICCR's General Cultural Scholarship Scheme in 2011-12 and five in 2012-13. For 2013-14 five slots were offered to Tuvalu which were completely utilized.

Mrs. Misalaima Nelesone, Permanent Secretary, Personnel and Training Department, attended International Workshop on Government Performance Management at the Institute of Public Enterprise organized at New Delhi from 1-12 July 2013 under ITEC programme.

Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Enele Sosene Sopoaga was one of the honored guests at the ITEC Day 2013 organized by the High Commission on 29 November 2013.

One diplomat from Tuvalu attended the special course for Pacific diplomats organized by FSI in Nadi, Fiji in May 2015.

Mr Leopold Kenieti Paeniu, United Nations Desk Officer, attended 63rd Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) held at Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi from 29 March- 28 April 2017.

Culture: 'Taka Dimi Ta', ICCR-sponsored Bollywood dance group did three performances in Tuvalu in August 2017 including that of Prime Minister's residence. ICCR-sponsored 'Centre-Stage', a 14-member Bollywood Dance Group led by Mr. Rishi Sharma performed on 3-5 February 2018 during the '**Namaste Pacifika**' Festival of India.

IDY in Tuvalu: Fifth International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Tuvalu on 21 June 2019. Due to the Covid situation in 2020, the local authorities were informed to celebrate the IDY virtually and a blogging contest was arranged. IDY 2022 celebrated in Tuvalu on 28 June 2022 with collaboration of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tuvalu Government. IDY 2023 celebrated in Tuvalu on 17 June 2023 with collaboration of Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture, Tuvalu Government.

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