

INDIA-PAPUA NEW GUINEA BILATERAL BRIEF

1. India opened its High Commission in Port Moresby in April 1996. Diplomatic relations with the Independent State of Papua New Guinea (PNG) were earlier conducted from Suva/Kuala Lumpur. PNG opened its resident Mission in New Delhi in October 2006. India and PNG enjoy warm and friendly relations. Both countries have been working closely in international fora.

Visits from India to PNG

2. The **President of India**, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paid a first-ever State Visit to PNG from 28 to 29 April 2016. During the visit, four MoUs were signed on – (a) Agriculture Research Cooperation between University of Technology, Lae (UNITECH) and Indian Council for Agricultural Research; (b) Cooperation in Health Sector; (c) LoC of US \$100 million for Infrastructure Development in PNG; and (d) Setting up a Centre of Excellence in IT in PNG. During the visit, Rashtrapatiji also made an announcement to provide retro-viral drugs and equipment for HIV patients in PNG, which were later supplied.

3. On 21st May 2023, PM Shri Narendra Modi arrived in Port Moresby to co-host the 3rd Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit with PNG PM James Marape. FIPIC-3 was held on May 22, 2023 and was attended by 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs). At FIPIC-3 Summit, PM Modi unveiled a 12-step action plan to strengthen India's partnership with PICs; the plan includes initiatives such as setting up Jaipur foot camps, providing dialysis units & sea ambulances, promoting yoga centres, supporting IT, solar projects, SMEs, & offering scholarships for the region. As a gesture of cultural exchange, a Tamil classic translated into the local language 'Tok Pisin', was launched by PM Modi. **PM Modi was honoured with the Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu (GCL) - the highest civilian award of PNG.** PM held bilateral meetings with PNG's Governor General Sir Bob Dadae and PM James Marape. MoUs on visa waiver for diplomatic & official passport holders and for establishing FoC were signed.

4. On Sept 27, 2022, EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar met PNG's FM Tkatchenko in Washington DC. Both leaders discussed (i) FIPIC-III (ii) LOC of US\$ 100 Million (iii) Visa on arrival facility by PNG (iv) trade & investments from India in manufacturing & agriculture sectors.

5. Shri Saurabh Kumar, Secretary (East) visited PNG on 5th Dec 2022 for the 1st **India-PNG Foreign Office Consultations**. Secretary (East) also visited University of PNG and met Frank Griffin, Vice Chancellor and discussed about strengthening educational links. On Dec 6, Secretary (East) called on PM Marape and discussed among other bilateral issues about jointly holding the 3rd FIPIC Summit in Port Moresby, 2023. Secretary (East) also met Minister for State-Owned Enterprises William Duma & Minister for ICT Timothy Masiu.

6. Other important visits from India were

- (i) A 3-member delegation led by Dr. M. Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, to participate in the 3rd Ministerial Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) Conference, held in Port Moresby on 23-25 August 2017;
- (ii) A 2-member delegation from Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), visited Port Moresby from 17-19 July 2018 to hold discussions with the Certified Practising Accountants (CPA PNG) and the Society of Indian Chartered Accountants Inc (SICA), in order to facilitate application of CPA PNG for its membership in International Federation of Accountants (IFAC);
- (iii) A three-member delegation, comprising two representatives of EXIM Bank of India and Mr. S. Chinpau Ngaihte, Under Secy (DPA-I), MEA, visited PNG from 25-29 November 2018 to finalize Agreement of LoC of US\$100 million to finance infrastructure related projects (US\$60 million for Bayer-Madang road project; US\$40 million for Hoskins-Kimbe road project). The delegation also visited the site of Hoskins-Kimbe Road project;
- (iv) A 4-member delegation led by Cdr. P.K. Srivastava, Director, Ministry of Earth Sciences visited PNG from 25-27 July 2019 on a scoping mission to set up an Institute for Sustainable Coastal and Ocean Research in Pacific region & a network of marine biology research Laboratories;
- (v) A 2-member delegation led by Justice Shri Sharad Arvind Bobde, Justice, Supreme Court of India (SCI) visited PNG from 8-10 Sept 2019 to attend Commonwealth Judges and Magistrates Conference held in Port Moresby. Justice Bobde delivered a keynote speech on "A judicial career from appointment to post retirement" during the event;

- (vi) Dr. Devyani Khobragade, JS (DPA-II) visited PNG on 17 Dec 2019. She held meetings with VC of University of PNG, had discussions on converting Mahatma Gandhi Centre of Excellence in Information Tech into a regional hub where ITEC trainees from Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau would undergo training. JS (DPA) held a meeting with DG (Bilateral), Department of Foreign Affairs.
- (vii) On 13 December 2023, Smt. Paramita Tripathi, JS (Oceania) along with an ISRO delegation led by Dr. SS Rao visited Port Moresby

7. Visits of Indian Naval Ships:

- (a) **INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata** visited Port Moresby from August 2 to 4, 2023. The ships hosted PM Marape and his cabinet ministers onboard Naval Reception on August 3. In his speech, PM Marape expressed gratitude for PM Modi's visit in May 2023 and encouraged further cooperation, promoting closer defense ties, naval visits, and people-to-people connections and fruitful exchanges.
- (b) INS Sahyadri, commanded by Capt Anil Jaggi with 200 crew members on board, paid a goodwill visit to Port Moresby from 12-15 June 2017. HC and Captain Anil Jaggi jointly hosted Dinner on Board on 13 June 2017 for 300 dignitaries from PNG Defence Forces, Govt officials, Diplomatic Missions, Indian businessmen community members. This was second visit on an Indian Naval Ship;
- (c) INS Tabar' visited Port Moresby on 22-24 July 2006.

Visits from PNG to India

8. The highest-level visit from PNG was by then **Prime Minister Peter O'Neill**, who visited India for Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (**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 & other areas. PM Peter O'Neill held a bilateral meeting with PM Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the Summit.

9. PM Marape delivered his remarks to Inaugural session of **Voice of Global South Summit**, (virtual) on Jan 12, 2023, attended by 10 HoS/HoGs. On August 17, 2024, PNG Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko and Environment Minister Simo Kilepa participated during the VOGSS 3.0 & delivered their remarks during respective sessions.

10. Ministerial visits from PNG to India

- (i) On 25 September 2023, Coffee Minister Joe Kuli attended the World Coffee Conference in India where he inaugurated the International Coffee Exhibition.
- (ii) From July 24-29, 2023, a PNG delegation, led by Minister for ICT Timothy Masiu visited Delhi. Discussions focused on IT, biometric-ID, UPI, digital transformation, and e-governance. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, MOS (Electronics & IT) met with Timothy Masiu, discussing IT cooperation. During the visit, an MoU was signed between PNG's ICT Secretary Steven Matainaho and India's CEO of National eGovernance Division on sharing India Stack, aiming to build capacities and implement population-scale Digital Public Infrastructure and Transformational Platforms for governance efficiency and transparency in PNG;
- (iii) On 5 July 2023, Dr. Lino Tom, Minister of Health attended 9th edition of International Pharma Exhibition (IPHEX) of PHARMEXCIL in Hyderabad as a Special Guest
- (iv) Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Agisa Sekie along with Mr. Tommy Angau, Asst Director, Asia Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs attended Indian Ocean Conference held in Maldives from 1-5 Sept 2019;
- (v) From 25-29 March 2019, PNG **Minister of Planning & Monitoring Richard Maru** visited New Delhi. PNG has been working to develop its SMEs sector and to set up Regional Youth Incubation Centres on Indian model as part of Medium-Term Development Plan-3;
- (vi) A PNG delegation led by **Minister for ICT & Energy Sam Basil** visited India to attend the Founding Conference of ISA held in New Delhi on 11 March 2018;
- (vii) A **25-member delegation, led by Minister for National Planning & Monitoring Richard Maru**, visited India from 10-16 Dec 2017. Delegation also included Minister for ICT and Energy Sam Basil, Minister for Education Nick Kuman, West New Britain Province Governor Sasindran Muthuvel;
- (viii) **Minister of Trade, Commerce & Industry Richard Maru** visited India in January 2013 to attend

the Partnership Summit 2013. He was accompanied by a delegation consisting of West New Britain Province Governor Sasindran and officials of Investment Promotion Agency.

11. Other important visits from PNG to India

- (ix) On May 02, 2024, Electoral Commissioner of PNG, Mr. Simon Sinai and Minister for Admin Services Mr. Richard Masere visited Delhi to attend Int'l Election Visitors program by Election Commission of India to observe Indian General Elections. They visited UIDAI to understand world's largest biometric card system.
- (x) PNG Supreme Court Chief Justice Gibbs Salika and two senior judges, Justice Derek Hartshorn and Justice Peter Toliken attended the 23rd Commonwealth Law Conference in Goa from 5-9 March 2023.
- (xi) Election Commissioner of PNG Mr. Patilas Gamato and five other senior officials from Electoral Commission visited India from 2-5 Sept 2019 to attend Association of World Election Bodies General Assembly, Bangalore; they also met ECI officials in New Delhi.
- (xii) Officials from PNG SMEs visited India from 3-9 Nov 2019 for fact-finding trip at the invitation of National Small Industries Corp (NSIC) of India.
- (xiii) **Chief Electoral Commissioner** Patilias Gamato, accompanied by two officials from PNG Election Commission, visited Bengaluru from 10-16 May 2018 to witness Karnataka Assembly elections; they interacted with BEL officials regarding supply of EVMs/VVPATs to PNG;
- (xiv) Ms. Janet Sape, **President/ Founder of PNG Women in Business**, participated in the Distinguished Visitors Programme held in India from 8-17 February 2016;

FIPIC-III DELIVERABLES

12. Twelve Hemodialysis machines have been sent to PNG in November 2024; After requisite clearances, it was delivered at Port Moresby General Hospital on 28th March 2025. India has committed one desalination plant to be built in Kerema Town, Gulf Province. An Indian team visited Kerema town & conducted feasibility studies on Nov 2024. Awaiting report from Indian side. PNG side has also been requested to confirm availability of Land for the plant.

HUMANITARIAN AID & OTHER ASSISTANCE

13. India has been providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief to PNG from time to time. On June 14, 2024, HADR relief assistance worth US\$ 1 million in the wake of **devastating landslide in Enga province** reached Port Moresby airport.

14. On 06 Dec 2023, India extended US\$ 1m immediate relief assistance to PNG in wake of the **Mt. Ulawun volcanic eruption** in West New Britain province. Relief materials & medical aid (17 tons) landed on Dec 22, 2023 at Port Moresby.

15. GOI extended financial assistance of **US\$ 1 million to PNG Govt for relief & restoration work in areas affected by Ulawun volcano which erupted in June 2019.**

16. In February 2018, GOI extended **US \$1 million grant to Govt of PNG towards earthquake relief.**

17. A consignment of 7.2 million dosages of anti-retro viral drugs received from India costing US\$3 million, was handed over to Govt of PNG in Nov 2016.

18. **Computers & peripherals** worth US\$ 760,000 out of cumulative grant-in-aid under India's Regional Assistance to Pacific Island Countries were provided to PNG during 2017-18. A cheque of US\$ 50,000 as Grant-in-Aid for providing of IT equipment to National Cultural Commission of PNG was handed over to PNG Minister of Culture Isi Leonard on Nov 3, 2022. Ministry has recently approved a Grant in Aid of K 5,42,500 (US\$ 153,893) to provide support to **improve ICT infrastructure** at University of Technology (UNITEC), Lae.

19. GOI, under an MOU for Establishment of Centre of Excellence in IT, has set up a **Centre of Excellence in Info Tech (CEIT)** at University of PNG in Port Moresby. CEIT was run by two IT Experts from India who were stationed at Centre for 2 years till Nov 2021. A proposal for extension of CEIT for 2 years has been approved and an expert is being identified by MeITy.

20. 132,000 doses of AstraZeneca Vaccine (Covid) were donated to PNG.

21. Indelible ink worth around USD 450,000 (4.2 tons) was flown from Karnataka to Port Moresby by air. Produced by Mysore Paints and Varnish Ltd, it arrived in PNG on May 21, 2022, for use in the PNG Elections. The High Commissioner handed it over to the PNG Electoral Commission on July 7, 2022. In June 2025, indelible ink worth around US\$ 217,000 was gifted to PNG Electoral Commission for the upcoming Local Level Government Elections.

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL RELATIONS

22. Bilateral trade figures between India & PNG for the last few years are as follows:

Value: US\$ million (Source: Dept of Commerce, GOI)

Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Export from India to PNG	56.02	56.17	69.95	85.84	70.06	70
Import into India from PNG	55.70	125.85	357.58	643.36	471.86	363
Total Bilateral Trade	111.72	182.02	427.53	729.20	541.93	433

23. **Main items of export from India to PNG** include textiles, merchandise, machinery & equipment, food items, pharma & surgical items, Rubber, etc. However, these are not reflective of actual trade since import of many Indian goods is via third countries. **Main items of import into India from PNG** are Nickel, Copper, Pearls, copper ores, wood & its articles, cocoa.

24. On March 28, 2024, 1st ever India-PNG business meet was organized virtually by Mission. It was co-hosted by High Commissioner and Shri Rohit Sharma from CC India. Businessmen/Consultants in health, IT, education, pharma sector shared views on regulatory framework in PNG & held business-to-business discussions.

25. First ever **CII delegation from India** paid a 4-day visit to PNG from 14-18 Feb 2016 to explore business opportunities. Delegation held meetings with a number of high-ranking dignitaries, including PM; Ministers of Trade, Commerce & Industry, Mines, Petroleum, Transport & Infrastructure; Public Enterprises & State Investments, Health, Tourism, Arts and Culture along with Governors of West New Britain Province, National Capital District (NCD); Western Highlands Province; Hela Province; and dignitaries attended. PM's wife hosted lady delegation members at the National Parliament of PNG.

CULTURAL RELATIONS

26. Cultural interactions/initiatives include visit of an ICCR-sponsored Siddhi Dhamal dance troupe from India to PNG in Oct 2013. On 7-12 June 2013, in association with University of Papua New Guinea, Mission organized Indian Film Festival at the University. A set of Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi was also presented to the University of PNG Library separately. Since 2015, Mission has been regularly organizing **International Day of Yoga in PNG**. Mission also celebrated Constitution Day, Ambedkar Divas, "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat", "Hindi Divas" etc. Many cultural events were organised under the aegis of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM). Regular Hindi classes are also being organized in the High Commission every Saturday.

27. An MoU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and UNITECH, Lae, was signed on 17 August 2018 to establish a long-term **ICCR Chair of Indian Studies at UNITECH**. Prof. Geeta Rani joined UNITECH in January 2021 to take up her assignment as India Chair to teach Economics. On 19 Feb 2019, another MOU on **cooperation in the field of diplomatic training** was signed between the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Department of Foreign Affairs of PNG.

28. There are 4,000 members of Indian Diaspora in PNG. They include professionals like Chartered Accountants, University Professors, School Teachers & Doctors. Some are engaged in professions like IT, finance, trading, business, missionary work, etc. There are influential Indians owning, directly or in partnership, prominent super stores and business. Governor of WNB Province PNG, Sasindran, an Indian-origin Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awardee, was awarded Padma Shri by GOI for his contribution to Public Affairs. Indian Community is making significant contributions to economy and society in PNG. India extended e-visa facility to PNG Nationals for ease of travel.
