

**Brief Embassy Report on Bilateral Relations – ITJ Division,
DGCIS, Kolkata.**

India-New Zealand Bilateral Relations

A. Introduction

1. Indian Trade Journal (ITJ) division of the Director General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) brings out weekly publication on Embassy Profile Report providing information on recent policy changes and happenings in other countries that may be of interest to the Indian trading community. This is the Profile Report depicting the Embassy of New Zealand.

2. India and New Zealand (NZ) have historically shared close and cordial ties. Similarities such as membership in the Commonwealth, common law practices and pursuing shared aspirations of achieving economic development and prosperity through democratic governance systems for diverse communities in both countries (NZ prides itself as one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world with 213 ethnicities officially recorded) provide an excellent backdrop for deepening the friendly ties. Both countries became independent in the same year and diplomatic representation of India was established in 1950 with the opening of a Trade Commission, which was later upgraded to High Commission. Tourism and sporting links, particularly in cricket, hockey and mountaineering, have also played a significant role in fostering goodwill between the two countries. Both countries are fellow travelers in their commitment to disarmament, global peace, North-South Dialogue, human rights, ecological preservation and combating international terrorism.

3. Leadership of both countries have shown significant interest in raising all aspects of the relationship to the next level. This is reflected in a series of high-level bilateral visits and meetings. Prime Minister Modi, met NZ PM Chris Hipkins on 22 May 2023 on the sidelines of FIPIC-III Summit in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea and various issues including Parliamentary exchanges, export of mangoes, direct air connectivity, culture, sports and people to people ties were discussed. Last one year has seen a large number of visits such as that of EAM and MOS(RRS) to New Zealand in October 2022 and September 2023 respectively and NZ Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta to India in February 2023. EAM had a bilateral meeting with his counterpart and discussed opportunities for expanding the relationship and cooperating on new areas, such as climate change and sustainable agriculture and also discussed how to develop opportunities in the economic, cultural, technology and services sectors, and to strengthen people to people links. MOS(RRS) participated in the 1st India Business Summit with New Zealand's Prime Minister Chris Hipkins, emphasizing India's economic growth and bilateral relations.

B. Commercial Relations (Trade and Foreign Investment) – Recent facts & figures

4. India is NZ's 15th largest two-way trading partner with total two-way trade valued at US\$1.56 Bn during the year ending June 2023. India primarily imports logs (which is currently halted due to a phytosanitary issue) and forestry products, wood pulp, wool and edible fruit & nuts from NZ. Indian exports to NZ mostly are pharmaceuticals/medications, precious metals and gems, textiles and motor vehicles and non-knitted apparel and accessories. An account of Bilateral commodities trade in goods from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as under:

The Export-Import statistics as per India's Ministry of Commerce data bank from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as follows:

The Export-Import statistics from 2019-20 to 2023-24

(US Dollar Million)

S. No		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.	Export	378.55	486.25	487.60	547.84	538.33
2.	Import	521.53	381.53	374.84	477.74	335.07
3.	Total Trade	900.08	867.78	862.44	1025.58	873.40

(Source: Doc, Ministry of Commerce & Industry)

5. 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 to service Fonterra, one of the world's biggest dairy cooperatives. In 2020, it won NZ\$ 20 million annual contract from Fonterra. In September 2018, the Indian cab services company, Ola, launched in NZ and has been gradually expanding its operations. Mahindra Motors, Tech Mahindra Ltd, Infosys, Dr. Reddy Laboratories and Royal Enfield Motors have a presence in NZ. In October 2020, Tech Mahindra announced the acquisition of Melbourne based consulting company Tnzing Ltd for \$ 29.5 mn. In October 2016, Zindia Limited (the largest exporter of NZ logs to India) signed an MoU with Adani Port and SEZ Limited to promote a Timber Industrial Park at Mudra Port in Gujarat.

6. 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.

7. India NZ Business Council (INZBC) and India NZ Trade Alliance (INZTA) are the two prominent organizations working to promote India-NZ trade and investment relations. Founded in 1988 and based in Auckland, INZBC lobbies with the government, disseminates information through its publications and facilitates business development by leveraging networks. Every year it organizes its flagship event titled ‘India-NZ Business Summit, which draws participation from the highest level of leadership in government, business and academia from both countries to deliberate on ways and means of strengthening bilateral trade and investment. The last edition of the Business Summit was held in August 2023 in Delhi. INZTA was founded in 2015 and offers a range of services to companies seeking to enter markets in both countries and liaises with all major business chambers of India including CII, ASSOCHAM, etc.

C. Other Major Areas of Cooperation:

- Several Agreements/ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) have been signed between India and Mauritius for cooperation in the fields of defence, economic and commercial links, technical cooperation and culture.
- Hon EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar visited New Zealand from 5th to 9th October 2022. EAM level visit happened after a gap of 20 years. FM Nanaia Mahuta welcomed EAM. Both the Ministers discussed opportunities for expanding the relationship and cooperating on new areas, such as climate change and sustainable agriculture and also discussed how to develop opportunities in the economic, cultural, technology and services sectors, and to strengthen people to people links. Later on the day, EAM paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt. Hon. Ms. Jacinda Ardern and afterwards participated in an event along with the Prime Minister to felicitate members of the Indian community in New Zealand for their exceptional achievements and contributions. Both leaders released India@75 postage stamps to commemorate and showcase Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in New Zealand. EAM also launched the book ‘Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery’. During the visit EAM also interacted with several Ministers, including H.E. Ms. Priyanca Radhakrishnan, Minister for the Community & Voluntary Sector, Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities, and Youth, who is the first person of Indian origin to become a Minister in New Zealand, In Wellington, he inaugurated the newly constructed Chancery building of the High Commission of India on 9 th October before departing for Australia.
- On 10 February 2022, Jammu and Kashmir Government signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with New Zealand G2G for revamping the sheep farming sector in the Union Territory.
- Bilateral institutional mechanisms: The 5th edition of India-NZ Foreign

Ministry Consultations (FMC) took place in Wellington on 18 August 2023. Co-chaired by Shri Saurabh Kumar, Secretary (East) and Ms. Deborah Geels, Deputy Secretary - Americas and Asia Group, MFAT the meeting highlighted the strengthened engagement between the two countries. Discussions included various aspects of the bilateral relations, including political, economic, trade, defence, education, science, technology, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people connections. The agenda also covered regional and global issues such as India's roles in G-20, Indo-Pacific, ASEAN, Commonwealth, and the UN. The second edition of the India-New Zealand 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. The seventh round of India-NZ Economic Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 28 November, 2019 and discussions focused on current economic conditions, global economic environment, infrastructure and tax reforms. India-NZ Joint Trade Committee meeting was held on 24 June 2022 to review & take measures in furtherance of bilateral trade partnership and co-operation in areas such as Agri, Pharma, Textile, Renewable Energy and services.

➤ Cooperation in the education sector: On 11 February 2020, The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi signed an MoU with NZ universities to establish an NZ Centre at the Institute, which was inaugurated by the then DPM and Foreign Minister of NZ Winston Peters. The Centre will be a hub of collaboration between the academic institutions of two countries in areas such as cancer, waste management, cyber security, robotics, autonomous vehicles and medical technology. The University of Auckland, NZ's largest university and IIT Kharagpur signed an MoU as part of Government of India's SPARC initiative, to advance academic exchange and research collaboration. In December 2019, both universities signed an agreement to offer joint PhD programmes in areas such as computational modelling, cyber-security, advanced materials, precision-driven medicine and cancer research.

➤ The Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R. Hari Kumar visited NZ from 29 September to 1 October 2022. CNS had bilateral meetings with his counterpart and other Defence authorities during his visit. An Agreement was signed by Indian Navy, the New Zealand National Maritime Coordination Centre and the Royal New Zealand Navy during this visit concerning the exchange of information relating to White Shipping.

➤ A 14 member NDC delegation led by Lt. General Sukriti Singh Dahiya, visited NZ from 29 May -02 June 2023. The delegation had members from Sudan, Oman, UK and Germany as well. They started their study tour from Auckland and visited Royal New Zealand Navy Base RNZN Marae, Waiouru Military Station in Rotorua and Te Papa museum in Wellington. In Defence House in Wellington they were addressed by Air Marshal Kevin Short, Chief of Defence Force, New Zealand and briefed by various defence officials and think tank on New Zealand's cultural and political context, security dynamics in the Indo- Pacific Region, New Zealand's approach to security, New Zealand's

defence force and defence policy.

- Two Indian Naval Ships viz. INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata visited NZ on goodwill visits and docked at Wellington and Auckland respectively from 31 August – 03 September 2023. High Commission of India along with Royal NZ Navy welcomed the Naval Ships. The visit also provided an opportunity for the people of New Zealand and local media to witness first-hand the capabilities of these modern naval vessels and gain insights into the rich naval heritage of India.
- Civil Aviation Cooperation: Given the large Indian diaspora in NZ and increasing two-way tourism flow, there is a strong case for a direct air connection between the two countries which might prove to be a game-changer for all aspects of bilateral relations. During Minister Damien O'Connor's visit to India in August 2023, the Air Services Agreement between India and NZ was upgraded and the issue of improving air links with India with the private sector was discussed. This agreement will also enhance code-sharing flight opportunities between Auckland and New Delhi.
- All Indian festivals including Diwali, Holi, Rakshabandhan, Baisakhi, Guruparv, Onam, Pongal, Annakut etc are celebrated with much enthusiasm all over NZ. A set of four new stamps depicting the story of Diwali has been issued by New Zealand Post in 2021. 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and the 550th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev were celebrated all over NZ and the historic occasions were marked by NZ government by releasing commemorative postal stamps. Independence Day, Republic Day and International Day of Yoga are also celebrated with much enthusiasm both officially by the High Commission as well as by various community associations in all big cities of NZ. Traditional Maori cultural troupes occasionally visit India and perform at various prestigious venues. 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.
- The International Day of Yoga is widely celebrated in New Zealand. This year, a series of events took place at various locations, including Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, Invercargill, Dunedin, Hamilton, and Rotorua, from June 17th to 25th June 2023, to commemorate this significant day and raise awareness about the benefits of yoga. The most important IDY 2023 event was held at the New Zealand Parliament on June 21st, 2023, with the participation of Ministers, MPs, and Parliamentarians. The session emphasized the significance of yoga in people's lives and communities. It was co-hosted by Hon. Minister Ms. Priyanca Radhakrishnan and Member of Parliament Ms. Ingrid Leary, with Hon. Minister Ms. Ginny Anderson delivering the opening remarks.
- Protocol on Cooperation on Science & Innovation between India and New Zealand People-to-people contacts have flourished since migration from India began at the turn of the last century. NZ has approximately 2,50,000 persons of Indian origin & NRIs, a

vast majority of which have made NZ their permanent home. India was the second largest source of international students in NZ pursuing higher education in various disciplines such as information technology, hospitality, science, engineering and architecture. Prior to the outbreak Covid-19. After the pandemic, it has come down drastically. However, the number of students continue to grow after the opening on NZ borders.

Source: www.mea.gov.in