
India-Republic of Marshall Islands Bilateral Brief

India was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) in April 1995. India and RMI share warm bilateral relations encompassing a wide range of areas including blue economy, climate change, disaster preparedness, health, education, and renewable energy. RMI had criticized India's nuclear tests in 1998, but this was largely driven by their own unpleasant memory of Bikini Atoll where the U.S. conducted 67 nuclear tests in 1950s (even today, inhabitants of Bikini Atoll suffer from various kinds of cancers and the soil is so heavily polluted that no form of agriculture is possible). In April 2014, RMI brought a lawsuit in the international Court of Justice against the nine nuclear-armed countries, including India. However, there has not been any attempt to raise this issue at bilateral level with India. India's relations with the RMI are covered from Japan with the Indian Ambassador to Japan being concurrently accredited to the RMI. Honorary Consul General of India in RMI Mrs. Ramona Levy Strauss was appointed on 11 May 2021.

2. The Second Forum of India-Pacific Island Cooperation (FIPIC) was held in India from 19-21 August 2015 and the summit was organized in Jaipur on 21 August 2015. Then President Christopher Loek visited India to participate in the 2nd FIPIC Summit. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi held India-Pacific Islands Developing States (PSIDS) Leaders' Meeting on 24th September 2019 on the sidelines of the 74th UNGA in New York. Mr. David Paul, former Environment Minister and Minister-in-Assistance to the President participated from RMI. RMI's Environment Minister and Minister-in-Assistance to the President, Mr. Christopher Loeak participated in the Environment Ministers' session of Global South Summit on 11 January 2023. The Third Forum of India-Pacific Island Cooperation (FIPIC) was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on 22 May 2023. The then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ms. Kitlang KABUA attended the FIPIC Summit as special envoy of President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

3. **Mutual Visits:** Former President of RMI Kesai Note visited India over a decade ago, as a member of an inter-parliamentary delegation (in his then capacity as the Speaker of the Parliament). RMI's Minister for Public Works Hiroshi Yamamura, accompanied by Mr. Jemi Nasion, CEO, Tobolar Copra Processing Authority of RMI, visited Kochi from 3-5 February 2015 for the Asia Pacific Coconut Community Session/Ministerial Meeting. Former RMI Ambassador Tom D. Kijiner (residence in Tokyo) presented his credentials to President Shri Pranab Mukherjee in New Delhi on 18 March 2015. Indian Navy Ship Satpura visited Majuro on 13-15 August 2016 after participating in the RIMPAC in the Pacific Ocean; this was the first ever visit of an Indian Navy ship to RMI. As the first (and only till date) Ministerial visit from India to RMI, Union Minister of State for HRD Shri Upendra Kushwaha paid an official visit to RMI on 10-11 July 2018. During the visit, both sides reaffirmed commitment to further advance ties in areas of mutual interest such as blue economy, climate change, disaster preparedness, health, education and renewable

energy. India committed to extend a grant of USD 300,000 for a Water and Sanitation Project of Aur Atoll Local Government. On behalf of the Government of India, MoS extended an invitation to then President of RMI Hilda C. Heine to visit India at a mutually convenient date. Ambassador of India to RMI H.E. Mr. Sibi George presented his credentials to Hon'ble RMI President Mr. David Kabua on 06 April 2023 at Majuro.

4. **Bilateral Trade:** Because of the constraints of distance and a small market size of RMI, trade between India and RMI is very limited. India's total trade with RMI in 2022-23 was recorded at US\$ 1.36 million in which India's export to RMI was US\$ 0.48 million and imports were US\$ 0.88 million. The predominant commodities of trade are mineral oil and related products, pharmaceutical drugs, vehicles (other than railway) and parts thereof, electrical machinery and equipment, inorganic chemicals and iron and steel.

5. **Training Programme/Scholarships:** Indian assistance in capacity building in the areas of health and education has been welcomed by RMI. Ministry is currently offering two ITEC slots annually to RMI.

6. **Bilateral Assistance:** Since 2005, India has provided more than USD 1.8 million as assistance to RMI for various projects relating to purchase of equipment, disaster relief, national export strategy, community and local government projects harnessing solar energy, water and sanitation among others. In September 2020, 7,500 tablets of HCQ were sent to RMI as medical assistance.

7. **Bilateral Treaties and Agreements:** The Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) between India and RMI was signed in March 2016 to strengthen bilateral tax cooperation. India ratified the Agreement on 23 May 2016 and completed necessary internal procedures and RMI ratified and notified the completion of internal procedures on 6 December 2018, thereby bringing the agreement into force. RMI signed the Framework Agreement of International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 21 August 2019 and ratified the same on 24 December 2020. The Agreement between India and RMI on Exemption from Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic and Official passports was signed in Tokyo on 18 February 2020 and entered into force on 30 October 2020.

8. **Cooperation at Multilateral Fora:** India and RMI cooperate at multilateral fora. During the visit of MoS HRD to Majuro in July 2018, RMI expressed strong support for India's permanent membership at the reformed UNSC. RMI extended support for co-sponsoring India's resolution to proclaim 21 June as the International Day of Yoga at the UN.

9. **Indians living in RMI:** As per latest information from RMI Embassy in Tokyo, currently there are 15 Indian nationals residing in RMI.

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