

Foreword from the High Commissioner



The New Year always brings a mix of flashbacks and future gazing. This year, the balance is tilted heavily towards the former for me. As my term as High Commissioner comes to an end, it's time to bid farewell and look back on three action-packed years. Engaging with India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal—increasingly important actors in the Indo-Pacific region—has been rewarding at a professional as well as personal level. I got a ringside view of the democratic machinery in action in India, the world's biggest democracy, and in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, as all four countries went to polls between 2017 and 2019. Working to deepen New Zealand's relations with our partner countries through trade, culture, education, tourism and sports, my team and I have tried to draw on the four values or guiding principles of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: Kotahitanga (drawing strength from diversity), Manaakitanga (honouring and respecting others), Courage and Impact. Among the many memories during my time here, what I will treasure most fondly is the experience of meeting people in the cities and villages I got the opportunity to visit, because people-to-people links are the living building blocks of relationships between countries.



The past year saw significant developments in New Zealand such as the first Wellbeing Budget, the Zero Carbon legislation aiming to make the country almost carbon neutral by 2050 and the national Human Rights Action Plan focusing on four priority areas of women and girls' rights, rights of persons with disabilities, LGBTIQI+ rights and abolition of the death penalty. Following the Christchurch terrorist attack in March, New Zealand took the lead along with France to adopt the Christchurch Call to Action to eliminate terrorist and extremist content online. Almost 50 countries, including India and Sri Lanka, have supported the Christchurch Call.

My successor should arrive in the first half of this year, but before that, Grahame Morton—whom you will remember as my predecessor—is returning to India as Chargé d'Affaires for a few months from January. In 2020, we will also see the opening of a new post in Sri Lanka. Thank you for all the support you have given us over the years. I wish you all rangimarie (peace), tumanako (hope), aroha (love) and oranga (good health) for the New Year!

Joanna Kempkers

New Zealand High Commissioner to India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and Ambassador to Nepal

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Upcoming Events

- New Zealand Minister of Immigration Iain Lees-Galloway to visit Mumbai in January
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- Delegation from New Zealand to attend Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi from 13-17 January
-
- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters and Minister of Economic Development, Environment and Trade & Export Growth David Parker to visit India in February
-
- New Zealand Centre to be launched at IIT Delhi in February

NZ gets first female naval Commodore



Melissa Ross made naval history in New Zealand by becoming the country's first female naval Commodore. Ross, the first woman to achieve the rank of Commodore in the Royal New Zealand Navy, is also the country's first female Deputy Chief of Navy. We're looking forward to seeing her in New Delhi for the Raisina Dialogue this month.

Lifting defence ties



Air Commodore Ian Mower, New Zealand Defence Adviser to India, and Captain Shaun Fogarty, Director, Strategic Engagement, New Zealand Defence Force, visited India from 25-30 November. They met with representatives of the Indian defence establishment, both government and think tanks. They also paid a visit to the National Defence College in New Delhi, which has been part of staff college exchanges, helping New Zealanders and Indians in uniform to study side by side. Captain Fogarty will take over from Air Commodore Mower as Defence Adviser to India.

NZ Ease of Doing Business workshop in Karnataka

Creative HQ, New Zealand's leading provider of structured innovation programmes for start-ups, corporates and government, conducted an Ease of Doing Business workshop for the Government of Karnataka in Bengaluru in December. Chief Secretary T.M. Vijay Bhaskar inaugurated the workshop in the presence of Gaurav Gupta, Principal Secretary, Commerce and Industry, and Gunjan Krishna, Commissioner, Industrial Development and Director of Industries and Commerce. This was the first such engagement by New Zealand in India. As No. 1 in the world for Ease of Doing Business for four years running, we're in the business of making business easy, and look forward to future engagements with our partner countries.



High Commissioner's farewell visit to Sri Lanka



High Commissioner Joanna Kempkers paid a farewell visit to Sri Lanka in early December, meeting newly elected President Gotabaya Rajapaksa (*image left*) and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. The High Commissioner also met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Dinesh Gunawardena; Minister of Industrial Export Investment Promotion, Tourism and Aviation Prasanna Ranatunga; Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Legal Reforms Nimal Siripala de Silva; Minister of Mahaweli Development, Agriculture and Trade Chamal Rajapaksa; and Minister of Plantation Industries and Export Agriculture Ramesh Pathirana. New Zealand-Sri Lanka ties and ways to deepen them were discussed at length, as we look forward to the opening of a High Commission in Colombo in 2020.

When author Ruth Paul met Delhi's little bookworms



In December, we invited New Zealand's multi-award winning children's author and illustrator Ruth Paul to India for the Bookaroo Children's Literature Festival. Following the festival, we took Ruth to the colourful Katha Lab School, followed by Pearl Academy, where she discussed illustration techniques with students. At Tagore International School, we teamed up with Scholastic India to conduct a storytelling session that ended with the students making impromptu picture-stories based on just three words! Our last stop was Sanskriti School, and Ruth's visit fit perfectly into their Book Week. We collaborated with Deepalaya NGO for a drawing and storytelling session with children who frequent their community library. Ruth also interacted with international publishing consultant Jaya Bhattacharji Rose.

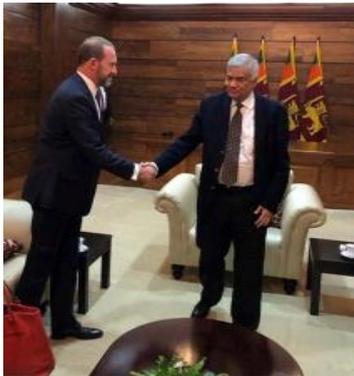
High-level visits strengthen New Zealand's ties with partner countries

We ended 2019 with back-to-back high-level visits to India and Sri Lanka. The visits, by ministers, government officials and parliamentarians, ensured that New Zealand's relationship with its partner countries continues to grow and thrive across sectors.



New Zealand Minister of Agriculture, Biosecurity, Food Safety and Rural Communities and Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth Damien O'Connor visited India from 5-7 November. Agriculture, trade, food safety and Ease of Doing Business were the talking points as he engaged with government and industry in Mumbai and New Delhi, including an interaction organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (*image left*).

Minister O'Connor met with Minister of Commerce and Industry and Railways Piyush Goyal (*image right*); Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Sanjeev Kumar Balyan; Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Kailash Choudhary; and Minister of State for Health Ashwini Kumar Choubey. Later, he visited Amul in Anand, Gujarat, to explore opportunities for collaboration in the dairy sector. He also visited a range of markets to get an idea of the local supply chain that enables Indian customers to have a taste of New Zealand produce.



At the same time as Minister O'Connor's visit, New Zealand Minister of Justice Andrew Little travelled to Colombo, Sri Lanka, to attend the Commonwealth Law Ministers' Meeting from 4-8 November. He spent a day promoting New Zealand's growing bilateral relationship with Sri Lanka, meeting with then Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe (*image far left*), Minister of Justice Thalatha Atukorale, Minister of Muslim Affairs Abdul Haleem, and Attorney-General Dappula de Livera. Serious issues such as cooperation in security and counterterrorism, people smuggling and the abolition of the death penalty were all discussed. Minister Little even found time in his schedule to visit the beautiful Gangaramaya Temple and learn about Sri Lankan Buddhist traditions (*image left*).

Keeping up the people-to-people interaction, a New Zealand Parliamentary Friendship delegation flew to Mumbai and New Delhi from 20-26 November. The parliamentarians met with representatives of government, industry and think tanks, and also interacted with young leaders from a variety of fields. It was an occasion to further relations between the two countries, exchange views and deepen understanding on everything from politics to policy, economy to environment, business to Bollywood! The delegation visited the NGO CanSupport – Caring for People with Cancer, a beneficiary of the High Commission's Head of Mission Fund (*image above*).



On 28 November, the seventh bilateral Economic and Financial Dialogue between New Zealand and India was held in New Delhi (*image left*). A delegation from New Zealand Treasury travelled to the Indian capital to attend the meeting. Taking the New Zealand-India economic relationship further through the Dialogue with the Ministry of Finance, Government of India, the delegation exchanged views on relevant economic matters. The delegation also met with Chief Economic Adviser

Krishnamurthy Subramanian, besides representatives of industry and think tanks.

Auckland University and IIT offer first joint PhD

In a historic first, the University of Auckland and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur have come together to offer a joint PhD programme. This is the first time that such an agreement has been signed between a New Zealand university and IIT. Under the programme, students will spend time in both universities and study under the supervision of academics in both institutions. The programme will begin with Engineering but may expand to other subject areas. With this, New Zealand and India take another step towards stronger economic and research ties.



Massey signs MoU with NIFT for sustainable fashion



Joining hands for sustainable fashion, the College of Creative Arts, Massey University, New Zealand, and National Institute of Fashion Technology, India, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the New Zealand High Commission on 28 November. The MoU will facilitate closer research connections and strengthen education ties between the two countries. Under the New Zealand Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia programme, the two institutions collaborate as part of a

sustainable fashion team project named 'Make Fashion Circular: A New Sustainability Paradigm'. The scholarship programme is funded by the New Zealand government and administered by Education New Zealand.

A song and dance about haka

A kapa haka group from Gisborne, New Zealand, the Waka Toa group, visited New Delhi on 23-24 October. We greeted the group with a traditional Māori mihi whakatau (welcome ceremony). We were then treated to waiata (Māori songs)—some original compositions and some well-known ones—and haka, complete with skilfully twirled poi (a ball attached to a long string). The group later visited the Air Force Bal Bharati School, where the students joined in enthusiastically for some power haka! Their next stop was Delhi Dance Academy, which saw the dancers trying their hand at a spot of Bollywood dancing.



Namaste India...Bollywood style!



A group of students from Victoria University and University of Auckland toured India in November-December as part of the Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia programme. The group travelled to Bengaluru, Mysore, Chennai, Pondicherry, Mumbai, Jaipur and New Delhi, visiting a wide range of institutions, including leading companies and universities. At the High Commission, the Education New Zealand team interacted with the group, at the end of which the students performed a surprise Bollywood number, and boy, did they dress the part!

About Us



The High Commission advances New Zealand's interests in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka and promotes greater ties between our countries. Our representation in India includes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand Trade & Enterprise, Education New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and Tourism New Zealand. You can email us on nzhcindia@mfat.net.