

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

MP for Hauraki-Waikato
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Minister of Local Government
Associate Minister for Māori Development



9 December 2022

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON 6160

APPROVED: YES NO


Rt. Hon. Jacinda Ardern
PRIME MINISTER

Tēnā koe e te Pirimia

APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE – TRAVEL INDIA ^{s6(a)}

IN FEBRUARY 2023

1. I am writing to seek your approval in principle to travel to India ^{s6(a)} in my capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs between 7 and 12 February 2023.
2. I received an invitation to visit **India** from my Indian counterpart, External Affairs Minister Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, during his visit to Aotearoa New Zealand in October. I had planned to visit India in 2022, yet despite the hard work by both sides to confirm a visit, it was not possible to schedule this year. A visit to India follows recent visits by Ministers Whaitiri and O'Connor, and will be important to progress trade and economic, education, security, cultural, and indigenous engagement goals in our bilateral relationship.
3. India is a priority relationship for Aotearoa New Zealand. MFAT's *India-New Zealand 2025: Investing in the Relationship* strategy identified political engagement as an essential tool to strengthen our relationship with India. ^{s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)}
4. A visit to India would deliver on the following objectives:
 - It will further cement my constructive working relationship with Minister Jaishankar, building on the bilateral engagement we had in Aotearoa New Zealand in October. ^{s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)}
 - The visit will provide an opportunity to engage with India as a strategic partner in the region, in particular on issues that have direct impact on Aotearoa New Zealand's geostrategic interests such as security and climate change. ^{s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)}

- The visit will strengthen India's understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand's value proposition in the Pacific. India remains interested in strengthening its relations with Pacific Island countries and has expressed a keen interest in engaging with Aotearoa New Zealand on this. This visit will be an opportunity to further discuss India's engagement in the Pacific, including through the Pacific Island Forum.
- Global economic headwinds, and the need to continue trade diversification have further underscored the need to invest in the India relationship to support our trade recovery strategy. My visit will provide the political momentum for officials to continue to work on a range of innovative initiatives to grow bilateral trade and investment that were discussed during Minister O'Connor's visit in September.
- Increased in-person, direct engagement with India will have a strong domestic resonance, as our significant people-to-people links with India continue to grow at pace. Aotearoa New Zealand's Indian diaspora now accounts for five percent of the population, one of the highest proportions of Indian diaspora in the world. The diaspora is increasingly prominent in all spheres of Aotearoa New Zealand life and tends to maintain close links back to India.
s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) The Government of India also takes a close interest in diaspora politics globally, as demonstrated by Minister Jaishankar's attendance at the Indian Hall of Fame event during his recent visit.
- Minister Whaitiri's visit to New Delhi in September also opened possibilities for our engagement with India's large indigenous population. My visit will provide the opportunities to develop deeper relationships in this area and to present a more nuanced picture of Aotearoa New Zealand to India.

5. s6(a)

6.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

7.

8. An indicative programme of the visits to India ^{s6(a)} is included as **Annex One**.
9. I will be accompanied by one staff member from my office. Final costs will be determined once the itinerary is confirmed, but the estimated costs of the proposed travel included as an **Annex Two**.
10. If my travel is approved, I will arrange acting ministers in my Foreign Affairs and Local Government portfolio.
11. I acknowledge the changing global situation with respect to COVID-19 and will continue to monitor the situation in each country. I will adapt my travel plans if necessary including through contingency funding. My official delegation and I will follow COVID-19 protocols of each country.
12. Your consideration of this travel request is appreciated.

Nāku noa, nā



Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minita Take Aorere / Minister of Foreign Affairs

Annex One: Indicative Programme for MFA visit to India ^{s6(a)}

Tuesday 7 February

- Depart New Zealand for New Delhi
- A welcome dinner at the New Zealand High Commission in India with a small group (14 guests) of high-value interlocutors

Wednesday 8 February

- Meetings with External Affairs Minister Dr Jaishankar and other Ministers whose portfolios are relevant to our bilateral relationship, such as education, tourism, indigenous engagement, people-to-people links and/or defence, and security
- A roundtable event, or panel discussion, with about 50 key thought leaders from think tanks and academics, to discuss the foreign policy outlook and priorities of India and New Zealand
- A networking reception hosted at the High Commission with 200 high level guests, including External Affairs Minister Dr Jaishankar and Tribal Affairs Minister Munda, to:
 - o showcase the close bilateral relationship, building on Minister Jaishankar's recent visit to New Zealand
 - o demonstrate New Zealand's expertise, credentials, and deep understanding of the Pacific region as a key partner in the Indo-Pacific
 - o work on building linkages with India's indigenous communities

Thursday 9 February

- Further ministerial meetings and engagements, continued from Wednesday
- Engagement and korero with a range of community actors and business groups in India

s6(a)

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Annex Two: Indicative Budget

	Minister	Staff
Flights	\$20,950	\$20,950
Accommodation My official and I will stay at the Residence of the New Zealand High Commission in New Delhi. s6(a)	\$850	\$850
Per diems	\$500	\$500
Ground transport	\$0	\$0
Representation and Events India* - Welcome Dinner: \$975 for 14 attendees - MFA Reception: \$13,750 for 200 attendees incl. food and beverage (\$11,000) and AV, lighting and decorations (2,750) - MFA Roundtable / Panel Discussion: \$1,475 for 50 attendees - Others (security, photographer): \$925 s6(a)	\$17,725	\$0
MFAT is also contributing the same amount as the total cost will be split equally between my office and MFAT.		
Gifts	\$1000	\$0
Subtotal	\$41,025	\$22,300
Contingency (15%)	\$4017	\$3,345
TOTAL	\$45,042	\$25,654
<u>TOTAL \$70,696</u>		

* Please see the programme details in Annex One for further information of the events listed. The budget includes costs for food, beverage, and room set up.