

# Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit

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**Context-** The third Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on May 22, 2023. It was co-chaired by Indian and Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister and attended by 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs).

## **Key Highlights**

- The Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu (GCL), Papua New Guinea's highest civilian award, was presented to the Indian Prime Minister.

## **Which aspects of the third FIPIC Summit stood out most?**

- **India Stands with PICs:**
  - India emphasized the shared priority of reforming international institutions to amplify the voice of the Global South and support the sovereignty and integrity of all nations.
  - During the G7 summit, the Prime Minister mentioned discussions on the Indo-Pacific with Australia, the United States, and Japan as part of the Quad.
  - Open Radio Access Networks (RAN) will be implemented starting with Palau in the Pacific Region, according to plans announced by leaders of the Quad nations.
  - The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea additionally asked India to be a promoter for the PICs in the G-7 and the G-20 culminations.
- **12-Point Method:**
  - India likewise uncovered a 12-point improvement program in areas of medical care, the internet, clean energy, water and little and medium undertakings in PIC, as per which:
  - India will set up a super-specialty cardiology hospital in Fiji, introduce dialysis units and sea ambulances in each of the 14 PICs, and set up Jan Aushadhi Centres to provide medicines at a price that are affordable.
  - Each Pacific Island nation's small and medium-sized business sector will benefit from India's support.
    - In addition, India promised to provide desalination units in response to water scarcity issues.
- **"Thirukkural Book:**
  - In addition, the Tamil classic "Thirukkural" was released in Tok Pisin, the official language of Papua New Guinea, by the Indian Prime Minister and his counterpart in Papua New Guinea to bring Indian thought and culture closer to the people of this southwestern Pacific nation.

## **What is FIPIC?**

- India's commitment with the PICs is important for India's Act East Policy.
- A significant drive sent off under the rubric of the Demonstration East Strategy for the PICs is the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC).
- India and 14 PICs—the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu—created the multinational group known as FIPIC for cooperation.
- The first FIPIC summit was held in Suva, Fiji, in 2014, and the second one was held in Jaipur, India, in 2015. It was launched in November 2014.
- **Objective:**
  - To improve India's relations with the PICs in different fields, for example, exchange, venture, the travel industry, training, wellbeing, horticulture, environmentally friendly power, disaster management and climate change.
  - Additionally, FIPIC serves as a forum for discussion and consultation on issues of common interest both locally and globally.

### What is the Meaning of Pacific Island Countries?

- **Importance in Geopolitics:** The Pacific Island countries are decisively situated in the tremendous spread of the Pacific Sea, which has drawn the consideration of significant abilities like the US, Russia and China because of their true capacity for exchange, military presence, and partnerships.
- **Potential for Earnings:** These nations have tourism assets, fisheries, minerals, timber, and valuable natural resources.
  - Additionally, their marine resources are abundant in their exclusive economic zones (EEZs). They also connect various Pacific regions and act as transit points for international trade.
  - 9 of the world's 10 most active seaports are around here.
- **Diversity in Biology and Culture:** The diverse indigenous cultures, languages, and traditions of the Pacific Island nations are extremely valuable to humanity.
  - The protection and advancement of their special social legacy add to worldwide variety.
- **Possibly a Vote Bank:** The 14 PICs, bound together by shared monetary and security concerns, represent as many votes in the Unified Countries, and go about as a potential vote bank for significant powers to prepare global assessment.

### How are relations between India and Pacific Island Countries?

- Through the Non-Aligned Movement, the United Nations, and the FIPIC, India has engaged with the PICs on a variety of bilateral and multilateral platforms. India and the PICs share cultural and historical ties.
- India's commitment with the PICs is driven by its vision of a free, open and comprehensive Indo-Pacific district, as well as its obligation to help the improvement yearnings and environment strength of the PICs.
- The references to "vision for a free, open and comprehensive Indo-Pacific" are accepted to be connected with China's rising statement in the locale.
- **Assistance:**
  - India has been a dependable accomplice for the PICs particularly during the Coronavirus pandemic.

- As part of its efforts to help people affected by disasters and provide humanitarian assistance, India has given the PICs essential medicines, vaccines, and food. A portion of the instances of India's help to the PICs during the Coronavirus pandemic are:
  - In accordance with its Vaccine Maitri initiative, India provided Fiji with 1.2 million doses of the Covishield vaccine.
  - Provided fundamental drugs and clinical hardware worth USD 2 million to Papua New Guinea, 100 metric tons of rice to Nauru under its Main goal Sagar drive, credit extension worth USD 75 million to Fiji for a co-age power plant project.
- **Economic Relationships:** According to data from 2021 and 2022, the value of all annual trade between India and Pacific Island nations in commodities like sugar, pharmaceuticals, plastics, mineral fuel, and ores is 570 million USD.
  - Papua New Guinea is the most valuable trade partner among them.
- **Future Perspectives:** India and the PICs can possibly improve their participation in different areas, for example, blue economy, sea security, advanced network, medical care, training and ability advancement.
  - India can use its assets in data innovation, environmentally friendly power, space innovation and drugs to offer creative answers for the difficulties looked by the PICs.
  - The PICs can also benefit from India's experience and best practices in disaster management and climate change adaptation.