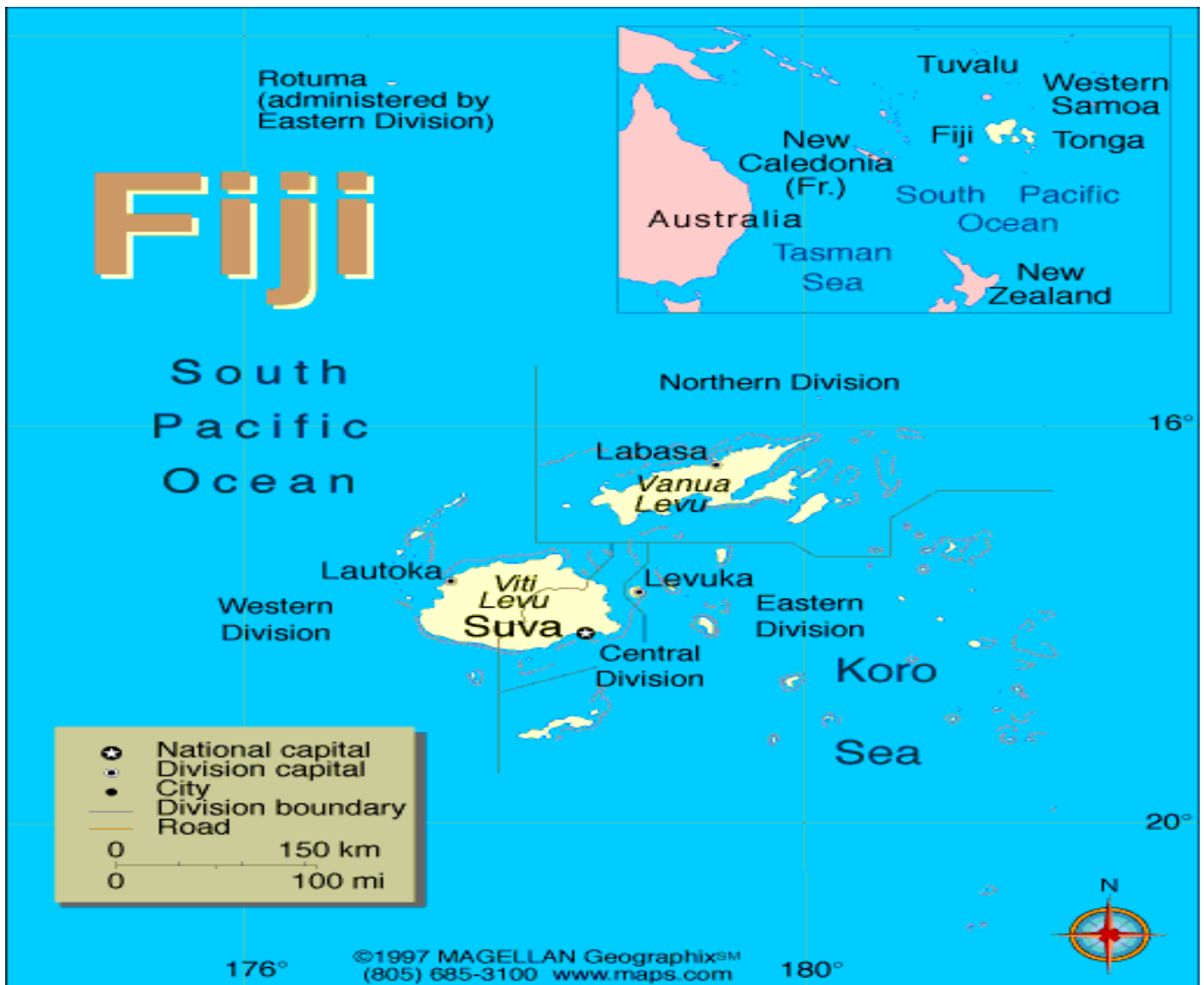


## INDIA-FIJI REALTIONS

Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka is on a three-day official visit to India.



### Historical Foundations

**Indenture System (1879–1920)** – The first Indian laborers, known as *Girmitiyas*, arrived in Fiji in 1879 under the indenture system to work primarily on sugarcane plantations. Approximately 60,553 Indians were brought to Fiji during this period.

**Diaspora Growth** – Over the years, Indian traders, professionals, and artisans migrated voluntarily, contributing to Fiji's economic, educational, and cultural development.

**Present Diaspora** – Today, the Indian-origin population in Fiji is around 300,000, constituting about 37% of the total population. Additionally, approximately 2,300 Indian nationals reside in Fiji, serving as a living bridge for bilateral relations.

### Diplomatic Engagement

**Early Diplomacy** – India established a Commissioner's office in 1948, well before Fiji's independence in 1970, primarily to safeguard the interests of the Indian diaspora.

**High Commissions** – After Fiji's independence, India upgraded its mission to a High Commission. Fiji reciprocated by opening its High Commission in New Delhi in 2004.

**Challenges & Resilience** – Following the military coups in 1987, India's High Commission and Cultural Centre in Suva were closed but later reopened—High Commission in 1999 and Cultural Centre in 2005—reflecting resilience in bilateral ties.

## High-Level Visits & Agreements

**2014 (PM Modi's Visit)** – Marked the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister in over three decades. Key outcomes included:

1. Launch of the FIPIC Summit (Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation)
2. Signing of three MoUs covering co-generation plant, diplomatic training, and land allocation for diplomatic missions

**2023 (EAM S. Jaishankar's Visit)** – Attended the 12th World Hindi Conference; key achievements:

1. Visa Waiver Agreement for diplomatic and official passport holders
2. Launch of solarisation project in Fiji
3. Inauguration of Girmit Gallery
4. Unveiling of a Sardar Patel bust

**2025 (Munich Security Conference)** – Jaishankar met Fiji PM Sitiveni Rabuka to reaffirm bilateral cooperation.

**2025 (Girmit Day Commemoration)** – MoS Pabitra Margherita attended as Guest of Honour; signed MoU recognizing the Indian Pharmacopoeia, enhancing healthcare collaboration.

## Cultural & People-to-People Ties

**Girmit Legacy** – Annual Girmit Day and the Girmit Gallery commemorate the sacrifices and contributions of Indian indentured laborers.

**Diaspora Contributions** – Indians in Fiji play key roles in sectors like IT, finance, healthcare, education, and hospitality.

**Hindi Language & Culture** – India supports events like the World Hindi Conference, promoting Hindi language, yoga, and Indian classical arts, strengthening cultural bonds.

## Development Partnership

**Sectoral Support** – India supports Fiji in infrastructure, healthcare, education, and renewable energy.

### Key Projects

1. Solarisation of Fiji's State House
2. Co-generation power plant
3. Healthcare capacity building initiatives

**Cultural Cooperation** – The Indian Cultural Centre in Suva, reopened in 2005, promotes yoga, Hindi, and classical arts.

### Capacity Building

**ITEC Programme** – Offers training for Fijian professionals in IT, governance, and administration

**Scholarships** – Provides higher education opportunities for Fijian students in India

### Strategic Outlook

**Shared Vision** – India's Indo-Pacific strategy, implemented through FIPIC, aligns with Fiji's goals of sustainable development, climate resilience, and regional cooperation.

**Strengthening Trust** – Agreements like the Visa Waiver and healthcare collaborations indicate deepening mutual confidence and long-term partnership.

About FIPIC (Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation)

**Established** – 2014

**Nature** – Multinational forum to strengthen India's engagement with 14 Pacific Island nations.

**Significance** – Part of India's broader "Act East" policy, promoting strategic, economic, and cultural cooperation.

**Member Nations** – Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

**Summits** –

1. 1st Summit: 2014, Suva, Fiji
2. 2nd Summit: 2015, Jaipur, India
3. 3rd Summit: 2023, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

About Fiji

**Location** – Island nation in Melanesia, part of Oceania, situated in the South Pacific Ocean.

**Colonial History** – British colony from 1874 until independence in 1970.

**Formation** – Most islands formed by volcanic activity approximately 150 million years ago.

**Climate** – Tropical marine, warm year-round with minimal seasonal extremes.

**Major Rivers** – Rewa, Navua, Sigatoka, Ba

**Highest Peak** – Mount Tomanivi

Source: [https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-fiji-to-strengthen-defence-ties-maritime-security-cooperation-125082501205\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-fiji-to-strengthen-defence-ties-maritime-security-cooperation-125082501205_1.html)

