

Proactive Release: Cabinet Paper CAB-26- SUB-0123 Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Chris Bishop - India, March 2026



Minister	Hon Chris Bishop	Portfolio	Sport and Recreation
Title of Paper	Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Chris Bishop – India, 6-12 March 2026	Date of Issue	2 June 2026

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Author</i>
20 April 2026	Report on Overseas Travel - Hon Chris Bishop – India, 6-12 March 2026	Hon Chris Bishop
20 April 2026	Minute of Decision: CAB-26-SUB-0123	Cabinet

Information redacted

Some parts of this information release are not appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA). Where this is the case, the applicable sections of the OIA have been noted.

Information has been withheld from this release under the following grounds of the OIA:

- s6(a) - to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand;
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- s9(2)(j) – to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations);

Under section 9(1) No public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding this information.

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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Chris Bishop – March 2026

Portfolio **Associate Sport and Recreation**

On 20 April 2026, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Chris Bishop under CAB-26-SUB-0123 on his travel, from 6 to 12 March 2026, to India to lead a sport diplomacy delegation.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

In Confidence

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Chris Bishop – India, 6-12 March 2026

1. I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to India from 6 to 12 March 2026.

Purpose

2. The purpose of the visit was to strengthen New Zealand's bilateral relationship with India through sport diplomacy, to build connections between national sporting organisations and commercial partners, and to launch the centenary programme under the banner of *100 Years of Unity through Sport*.
3. The visit also delivered on commitments made during Prime Minister Luxon's visit to India in March 2025, where both Prime Ministers agreed to commemorate 100 years since the 1926 tour of an Indian Army hockey team to New Zealand.
4. I also undertook engagements relating to New Zealand's upcoming co-hosting of the 2028 ICC Men's T20 World Cup, our next 'mega event' following the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

Report

5. I led a delegation of New Zealand sport leaders, business representatives, and officials to India from 6 to 12 March 2026. The visit covered Ahmedabad, Delhi and Mumbai and comprised chief executives from a range of national sporting organisations, representatives of New Zealand companies involved in the business of sport, and senior leaders from Sport NZ and the Asia New Zealand Foundation.
6. The visit was the first substantive activity in a year-long programme marking the centenary of sporting ties between New Zealand and India, and provided a platform for coordinated diplomatic, commercial and sporting engagement.

Ministerial and delegation engagements

7. A central component of the programme was a series of engagements in New Delhi hosted by India's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. I met with my counterpart, Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, and participated in delegation-level discussions with senior officials and leaders of Indian sporting organisations.
8. These engagements demonstrated strong alignment and ambition on both sides. India proposed a structured pathway for future cooperation, including:
 - 8.1. regular events and exchanges, including high-performance residencies;
 - 8.2. a rotating "Sports and Culture Week" across both countries; and

8.3. s 6(b)(i)

9. India also expressed strong interest in accessing New Zealand expertise in high-performance sport, including integrating elements of New Zealand's coaching frameworks into its National Institute of Sport and expanding coaching exchanges and capability-building programmes.

10. s 6(b)(i)

11. s 6(b)(i)

Centenary events and public diplomacy

12. The New Zealand High Commission hosted a reception in New Delhi to mark the centenary of sporting ties, attended by government representatives, business leaders, and current and former athletes. This event reinforced the long-standing people-to-people links between the two countries and provided a focal point for the broader programme.

13. The delegation also participated in community-level engagement, including a visit to Delhi Public School, where we engaged with students and promoted New Zealand's high-performance sport and education model. This engagement highlighted opportunities for future youth and student exchanges.

Business of sport engagement

14. The Mumbai leg of the visit focused on the commercial and innovation dimensions of sport. A high-level networking event brought together New Zealand Trade and Enterprise customers, Indian business leaders, and sporting stakeholders.

15. We also undertook site visits and briefings with major organisations shaping India's sport ecosystem, including Reliance Industries, the National Basketball Association's India office, and Tata Consultancy Services. These engagements provided insight into:

- 15.1. the scale and reach of India's sports broadcasting and digital platforms;
- 15.2. strategies for growing participation and fan bases in emerging sports; and
- 15.3. the application of advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, in sport administration and performance.

16. These discussions highlighted significant opportunities for New Zealand organisations to partner into India's rapidly expanding sport market.

Major event engagement

17. While in Ahmedabad, I attended the ICC T20 World Cup Final between New Zealand and India at the Narendra Modi Stadium, the world's largest sporting venue. I also participated in the formal handover of hosting rights to New Zealand and Australia for the next iteration of the tournament.

18. This provided a high-profile platform for New Zealand's sporting brand and reinforced our credibility as a co-host of major international events.

Cross-portfolio engagement

19. While in Ahmedabad I visited Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), a major infrastructure and economic development project. This engagement related to my portfolios of Infrastructure, Housing and Transport and provided useful insights into large-scale urban development, including planning, transport, and regulatory settings used to attract investment.

Outcomes and next steps

20. The visit generated several outcomes and follow-up actions. These include:

- 20.1. s 9(2)(j) [REDACTED]
- 20.2. progress on coaching exchanges and high-performance collaboration, s 9(2)(j) [REDACTED]
- 20.3. strengthened relationships between New Zealand and Indian national sporting organisations, s 9(2)(j) [REDACTED]
- 20.4. opportunities for education and athlete development partnerships, s 9(2)(j) [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
- 20.5. progress towards inbound tours to New Zealand in November 2026 as part of the centenary programme.

s 6(b)(i) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Insights

22. The visit confirmed that sport is a priority area in the New Zealand–India relationship s 9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Delivering on commitments made during Prime Minister Luxon's visit was therefore important in maintaining credibility and momentum.

23. s 6(a), s 9(2)(g)(i) [Redacted]

[Redacted]

25. The visit also demonstrated the value of coordinated “New Zealand Inc” engagement, bringing together government, sport and business stakeholders to maximise impact. Feedback from delegates indicates strong interest in pursuing partnerships and commercial opportunities arising from the visit.

26. s 6(a), s 9(2)(g)(i) [Redacted]

Proactive release

27. I intend to proactively release this paper within 30 business days in accordance with Cabinet Office Circular CO (18) 4 subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

28. I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Chris Bishop
Associate Minister for Sport and Recreation

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