

Embassy of India Bangkok

India-Thailand Relations

India and Thailand, located in each other's extended neighborhood, share a maritime boundary in the Andaman Sea. India's bilateral relations with Thailand are rooted in history, age-old social and cultural interactions and extensive people to people contacts. The shared link of Buddhism is reflected in regular pilgrimages to places of Buddhist interest in India by a large number of Thai people. Hindu elements can be found among those reflected in Thai architecture, arts, sculpture, dance, drama and literature. The Thai language incorporates Pali and Sanskrit influences. A large Indian Diaspora living and working in Thailand is another important bond.

In the past two decades, with regular political exchanges, growing trade and investment, India's ties with Thailand have now evolved into a comprehensive partnership. India's 'Act East' policy has been complemented by Thailand's 'Look West' policy in bringing the two countries closer. Both countries are important regional partners linking South and Southeast Asia. They cooperate closely in the ASEAN, East Asia Summit (EAS) and BIMSTEC groupings as also Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). The India-AESAN Agreement on Trade in Goods was implemented in January 2010 and the India-ASEAN FTA in Services and Investments was signed in September 2014 and came into force in July 2015.

Exchange of High Level Visits

Dignitary visiting Thailand	Period
PM Dr. Manmohan Singh	July 2004, Oct 2009, 30-31 May 2013
PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee	Nov 2002 (transit), Oct 2003
PM P. V. Narasimha Rao	April 1993
PM Rajiv Gandhi	Oct 1986
President V. V. Giri	1972
Vice President Dr. Zakir Hussain	1966
Dignitary visiting India	Period
HRH Princess Chulabhorn.	February 2013, Feb 2015
PM Yingluck Shinawatra	24-26 Jan 2012, 20-21 Dec 2012
HRH Princess Bajrakitiyabha	November 2011, June 2015
PM Abhisit Vejjajiva	April 2011
HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn	December 1998, Nov 2010
PM Somchai Wongsawat	Nov 2008
PM Surayud Chulanont	June 2007
HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn	1987, 1996, 2001, 2004, March 2005, Nov 2005, March 2007, Aug 2007, March 2008, Feb 2009, Aug 2009, March 2011, Oct 2011, Feb 2014, July 2014
PM Thaksin Shinawatra	Nov 2001, Feb 2002, June 2005
PM Gen Chatichai Choonhavan	March 1989

During 2015, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs (EAM) visited Thailand to co-chair the 7th Meeting of India-Thailand Joint Commission and to attend the 16th World Sanskrit Conference in Bangkok from 27-29 June 2015. EAM called on HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and Gen Prem Tinsulanonda, President of the Privy Council of Thailand. EAM and DPM & Minister of Foreign Affairs Gen Tanasak Patimapragorn held delegation level talks and exchanged the Instruments of Ratification of Extradition Treaty and signed the revised Double

Taxation Avoidance Agreement, MOU on Nalanda University and witnessed signing of MOU on establishing a Chair on Ayurveda at Rangsit University. Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State (I/C) for Commerce and Industry visited Thailand to attend the 71st Commission Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) on 28-29 May 2015. She held a bilateral meeting Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Executive Secretary of UNESCAP. The Minister also called on M. R. Pridiyathorn Devakula, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand and General Chatchai Sarikulya, Minister of Commerce of Thailand and addressed the business event organized by the Embassy. Shri Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor visited Thailand on 1-2 April 2015. He called on PM Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha, DPM & Defence Minister Prawit Wongsuwan, DPM & FM Gen Tanasak Patimapragorn and met Mr. Anusit Kunakorn, Secretary General of the National Security Council of Thailand.

DPM and Minister of Foreign Affairs General Tanasak Patimapragorn visited India on 10-11 March 2015. He attended Delhi Dialogue VII, called on Defence Minister Shri Manohar Parrikar and held delegation level talks with EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj. Secretary (DIPP) gave a presentation of 'Make in India' to the visiting Thai delegation. Commerce Minister Chatchai Sarikalya visited India from 24-26 Feb 2015.

During 2014, PM Narendra Modi discussed bilateral issues of mutual interest with PM General Prayut Chan-o-cha on the sidelines of ASEAN Summit in Nay Pyi Taw on 12 November 2014. Shri Kiren Rijiju, MoS for Home Affairs participated in the first Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific on 27 & 28 November 2014 in Bangkok. Mrs. Maneka Gandhi, Minister of Women and Child Development visited Bangkok to attend Asian and Pacific Conference on "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Beijing + 20 Review" on 19-20 November 2014. Earlier, Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Home Affairs participated in the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Bangkok from 23-26 June 2014. General Thanasak Patimaprakorn, Chief of Defence Forces, Royal Thai Armed Forces led a Thai delegation on an official visit to India from 28-30 June 2014. General Thanasak called on Arun Jaitley, Defence and FM and met General Bikram Singh, Chief of Army Staff in New Delhi.

PM Dr. Manmohan Singh accompanied by EAM Salman Khurshid and senior officials paid an official visit to Thailand at the invitation of PM Yingluck Shinawatra on 30-31 May 2013. He presented a sapling of Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gaya as a special gift to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej as a symbol of the shared cultural heritage. PM held wide-ranging talks with PM Yingluck Shinawatra on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. During the visit, six agreements/MoUs were signed and a joint statement was released.

PM Yingluck Shinawatra paid a State visit to India from 24-26 January 2012 as the Chief Guest for India's Republic Day celebrations. Six agreements/ MoUs were signed during the visit - the 2nd Protocol to amend bilateral Framework Agreement for FTA, MoU on Defence, Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology, Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons, Cultural Exchange Programme 2012-14 and an MoU for ICCR to establish a Chair at India Studies Centre in Chulalongkorn University. Thai PM met PM on sidelines of the 10th India-ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh in November 2012. PM Yingluck Shinawatra visited India again to participate in the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in New Delhi in December 2012. She visited Mahabodhi temple in Bodhgaya en route to New Delhi.

Thailand-India Parliamentary Friendship Group (TIPFG) was formed in the National Assembly of Thailand in 2008 and reconstituted in 2011 and again in 2014. A counterpart group was formed in India in December 2011. Thai Parliamentary delegation led by Senator Mr. Krich Atitkaew, President, TIPFG visited India in August 2012. A 19 member delegation led by Mrs. Meira Kumar, Speaker of Lok Sabha visited Bangkok for the 122nd Assembly of Inter Parliamentary Union in March 2010.

Bilateral Institutional Mechanisms

Joint Commission Meeting (JCM): India-Thailand JCM is at Foreign Ministers level. EAM and DPM & FM Gen Tanasak co-chaired the 7th session of India-Thailand JCM on 29 June 2015. Wide-ranging discussions were held in the areas of economic and commercial cooperation, culture, S & T, ICT, education, agriculture, legal and consular matters. The 6th JCM was held in New Delhi in December 2011.

Foreign office Consultations (FOC): India-Thailand FOC was held in New Delhi on 8 September 2014. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Secretary (East) exchanged views on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. Earlier FOC was held in Bangkok on 10 August 2012.

Defence Dialogue: Raksha Mantri Manohar Parrikar met DPM & Defence Minister of Thailand on the sidelines of ADMM+ in Kuala Lumpur on 3 November 2015. Admiral R. K. Dhowan, Chief of Naval Staff paid an official visit to Thailand from 23-26 July 2015. ACM Arup Raha, Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee visited Thailand on 6-9 Sept 2015. The fourth meeting of India-Thailand Defence Dialogue was held in Bangkok on 21-22 December 2015. A bilateral MOU on Defence cooperation was signed in January 2012. The current Defence cooperation comprises regular joint exercises/joint maritime patrols near the international maritime boundary to counter terrorism, piracy and smuggling; training of officers at each others' institutions and participation as observers in military exercises.

Economic & Commercial Partnership

Bilateral Trade: The last few years have seen a rapid growth in bilateral trade, which crossed US\$ 9 billion mark in year 2013-14. The Framework Agreement on India-Thailand FTA was signed in Bangkok in October 2003 and the second protocol to amend it was signed during the visit of Thai PM to New Delhi in January 2012.

(Amount in billion US\$)

Description	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	April–Sept 2015
Thai Exports	2.70	2.93	4.27	5.38	5.46	5.36	5.86	1.89
Thai Imports	1.94	1.74	2.27	2.96	3.73	3.70	3.48	1.53
Total Trade	4.64	4.67	6.54	8.34	9.19	9.06	9.32	3.42

Source: Department of Commerce, Government of India

FDI in India and Indian Investments in Thailand: Indian FDI into Thailand is around US\$ 2 billion since 1970s. Major investments from India to Thailand are in sectors such as agricultural products, minerals & ceramics, metal products and machinery, electrical and electronic products, chemicals and textiles. Actual inflow of FDI from Thailand into India from April 2000 to July 2015 is registered as US \$196.40 million. Thai investments are mainly in infrastructure, real estate, food processing, chemicals, and hotel and hospitality sector.

Major Indian groups namely Tata group (automobiles, steel, software), Aditya Birla group (chemicals, textiles), Indo Rama group (chemicals), Lupin (pharmaceuticals), Ranbaxy, Dabur, Bharti Airtel, NIIT, Punj-Lloyd, Kirloskar and public sector enterprises Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of Baroda, Air India, New India Assurance are present in Thailand. Leading Thai companies in the fields of Agro-processing, infrastructure, banking, automotive, engineering, housing and hospitality have active and growing business presence in India.

Major Thai companies active in India are - C P Aquaculture (India) Ltd., Krung Thai Bank Pcl., Ital Thai Development Pcl., Charoen Pokphand (India) Private Limited, Stanley Electric

Engineering India Pvt. Ltd., Thai Summit Neel Auto Pvt. Ltd., Thai Airways, and Precious Shipping (PSL) of Thailand, Preuksa Real Estate, Dusit and Amari group of hotels.

Connectivity: Air connectivity between India and Thailand is growing with around 150 flights per week, reflecting rapidly growing passenger traffic between the two countries. Bangkok is connected by air to 9 Indian destinations. India and Thailand are cooperating closely on improving regional connectivity through initiatives such as India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, Asian Highway Network (under UNESCAP), BTILS under BIMSTEC framework. The 2nd bilateral JWG on Infrastructure and Connectivity and 7th Task Force Meeting on the Trilateral Transport Linkage Project were held in Bangkok on 29 & 30 September 2014. Secretaries of Transport of India, Myanmar and Thailand met in Chennai (April 2015); Bengaluru (June 2015) and Bangkok (July 2015) to finalize the Trilateral Motor Vehicles Agreement. In 2015, over 1 million Indian tourists visited Thailand and around 120,000 Thai tourists visited India (mainly to Buddhist pilgrimage sites).

Culture: Cultural exchanges take place under the framework of a Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) between the two governments. An Indian Cultural centre was opened in Bangkok in September 2009. Cultural Agreement Programme for 2012-14 has been signed during the visit of Thai PM in Jan 2012. A number of India Studies Centers are operational in prestigious Thai Universities. Regular visits of Indian cultural troupes are organized, in addition to Indian film and food festivals etc. Embassy in collaboration with Ministry of Culture and several local partners organized Festival of India in Thailand in March 2014 and the 2nd edition was organized from March-May 2015. Over 7400 people participated in the 1st International Yoga Day celebrations at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok on 21 June 2015.

Education: An MoU on Cooperation in the field of Education was signed in 2005. During 2014-15 Government of India offered 130 scholarships to Thai students under its ITEC and ICCR sponsored schemes. A large number of Thai students are also studying on self-financing basis. Ministry of Human Resource Development provides for secondment of 8 professors every semester for the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Bangkok.

Government of India contributed Rupees 1.25 crores (Thai Baht 10 million) in 2008 towards construction of a new building for the Sanskrit Studies Centre at Silpakorn University, Bangkok and has deputed a Sanskrit professor. An India Studies Centre is functioning at the Thammasat University of Bangkok since April 1993. In 2008, the Mahidol University of Bangkok started a Masters of Arts course on Indian studies. A Chair in Chulalongkorn University's India Study Centre was inaugurated by HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn on March 6, 2012. Ministry of AYUSH and Rangsit University signed an MOU on establishing a Chair on Ayurveda at Rangsit University was signed on 29 June 2015.

Indian Diaspora in Thailand: It is estimated that there are around 250,000 people of Indian origin in Thailand. Many of them have lived here for several generations over the past century. Majority of them hold Thai nationality. The Indian community mainly comprises Sikhs, Punjabis, Gorakhpuris, Tamils and Sindhis. Two persons of Indian origin from Thailand have been awarded the Pravasi Samman in 2006 and 2010.

Embassies/Consulates: Besides the Embassy in Bangkok, India has a Consulate in the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai. Thailand has consulates in Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai besides its Embassy in New Delhi.

Visit the Embassy Website at: <http://www.indianembassy.in.th/>

Facebook: [Indian Embassy Bangkok](#)

January 2016
