
INDIA-MALAYSIA BILATERAL RELATIONS

India established **diplomatic relations** with the Federation of Malaya (predecessor state of Malaysia) in **1957**. India Malaysia **Strategic Partnership**, established in 2010, were elevated to **Enhanced Strategic Partnership** during the visit of PM Narendra Modi to Malaysia in November 2015. In **August 2024**, bilateral ties were elevated to **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP)** during the visit of PM Anwar Ibrahim to India.

PM Narendra Modi's recent official visit to Malaysia on 7-8 February 2026 reinforced the bilateral CSP yielding broad outcomes covering digital payments, security cooperation, semiconductors, health, disaster management, anti-corruption, audio-visual co-production, technical and vocational education, UN peacekeeping, and social security for Indian workers.

2. High Level VVIP visits since 2010

PM Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Malaysia from 26-28 October 2010. **PM Shri Narendra Modi** paid an official visit to Malaysia on 23 November 2015 following his participation in ASEAN-India Summit and East Asia Summit. **PM Najib Razak** visited India in March-April 2017 to mark the 60th anniversary of India-Malaysia diplomatic relations; and again, on 25-26 January 2018 to participate in the 25th anniversary celebration of India-ASEAN diplomatic relations. **PM Shri Narendra Modi** made a brief stopover in Malaysia on 31 May 2018 to congratulate then newly elected Malaysian **PM Mahathir Mohamad**. **PM Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim** undertook a State visit to India from 19-21 August 2024 along with 5 Cabinet Ministers. At the invitation of PM Anwar Ibrahim, **PM Shri Narendra Modi** paid an official visit to Malaysia on 7-8 February 2026.

3. Bilateral Institutional Mechanisms

Both sides have established **Foreign Ministers-level Joint Commission Meeting** and Secretary-level **Foreign Office Consultations** apart from **NSA-level Security Dialogue**. There are also established bilateral mechanisms in

Defence Cooperation (MIDCOM); Digital (MIDC); Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crimes; Science and Technology; Labor; Public Administration; and Traditional Medicine. Indian Parliament has constituted **Friendship Group** for Malaysia since 2011, whereas Malaysia has a Parliamentary Friendship Group on South Asia. India Malaysia **CEOs Forum** has been in existence since 2010.

4. Economic & Commercial relations

Malaysia is India's 3rd largest trading partner in ASEAN. A bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) covering goods, services and investment came into effect in July 2011. ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) came into force in January 2010 while ASEAN-India Trade in Services & Investment Agreement (AITISA) is operational since July 2015. The AITIGA review is currently ongoing with a view to address the imbalances and upgrade the agreement, for which Malaysia alongside India co-chairs the discussions with ASEAN countries. Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) signed in August 1995 was terminated in March 2016 in order to enter into the new model of BIT.

Malaysia ranks as the 31st largest investor in India with **FDI of US\$ 1.34 billion** since April 2000 to March 2026. Around **70-80 Malaysian companies, including joint ventures, are currently operating in India** across various sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, telecom, oil and gas, power generation, automotive, FMCG tourism, and human resources, collectively undertaking projects valued at over US\$4 billion. **Overall Malaysian investments in India, including those routed through third countries, are estimated at around US\$3.3 billion, while announced investments exceed US\$8.6 billion**, primarily in renewable energy, green hydrogen, green ammonia and infrastructure.

Indian companies maintain a strong and diversified presence across Malaysia's economy, spanning the digital, manufacturing, and broader corporate sectors. Indian companies have invested over USD3 billion in Malaysia and generated more than 30,000 direct jobs. In addition, the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), as of April 2026, reports that more than 150 Indian companies, including 61 joint ventures, operate in Malaysia across diverse sectors such as

manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, information technology, education, biotechnology, and healthcare.

India's major exports to Malaysia consist of petroleum products; engineering goods; meat, dairy and poultry products; organic chemicals; aluminum articles; electrical machinery; whereas **India's major imports from Malaysia** are palm oil, mechanical appliances; electrical machinery and equipment; mineral fuels/oils and petroleum products; industrial materials; organic chemicals; and rubber. Bilateral trade can be settled in Indian Rupee (INR) in addition to the current modes of settlement in other currencies since April 2023. Bilateral Trade (in USD billions as per Dept of Commerce, GOI):

Year	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Export	6.06	6.99	7.15	7.26	7.31	6.87
Import	8.39	12.42	12.74	12.75	12.54	14.18
Total	14.45	19.41	19.89	20.01	19.85	21.05

Both countries have established a Malaysia India Digital Council (**MIDC**) to enhance engagement in the digital domain, including in Digital Public Infrastructure, B2B partnerships, capacity building, cyber security, emerging technologies such as 5G, quantum computing, cloud computing, IoT among others.

5. Defence Cooperation

India-Malaysia defence relations have steadily grown over the years, from military training to supply of defence equipment and enhanced security dialogues. The MoU on Defence Cooperation signed in 1993 is the cornerstone of defence relations between the two countries. In July 2023, during the official visit of Hon'ble Defence Minister of India to Malaysia, an amendment to the MoU was signed.

Staff talks between all three services, at apex level, have been regularly held. The 10th Army to Army Staff Talks were held in December 2025 in Kuala Lumpur. The

11th Air Force Staff Talks was held in New Delhi in November 2024. 10th Navy to Navy Staff Talks were held in Kuala Lumpur on 10 June 2025. The 13th Secretary General level Malaysia India Defence Cooperation Meeting (MIDCOM) meeting took place in Malaysia on 19 February 2025. The annual 'Mini Defence Expo cum Defence Industry Symposium' in Kuala Lumpur, on 12 February 2026, saw participation by 12 Indian defence companies and 35 Malaysian companies.

Bilateral exercises are at the core of the defence cooperation. The bilateral Army Exercise HARIMAU SHAKTI was last held in Rajasthan in December 2025. Bilateral Naval Exercise SAMUDRA LAKSAMANA was conducted from February-March 2024 off the coast of Visakhapatnam. Bilateral Air Exercise UDARA SHAKTI took place at Kuantan, Malaysia in August 2024. India had a significant participation in the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) 2025 in May 2025. Royal Malaysian Navy, with its vessel KD INDERA SAKTI, participated in the International Fleet Review (IFR), while the Deputy-Chief of RMN attended the IONS Chief's Conclave Vishakhapatnam in February 2026. Indian Navy Ships regularly pay port visits to Malaysia.

6. Education

India and Malaysia signed an MoU in 2010 for bilateral cooperation in higher education. There are approximately 10,000 Indian students, in schools and higher education institutions in Malaysia. There are close linkages between the Indian and Malaysian higher educational institutions with over 500 MoUs/Agreements. There are 3 CBSE schools in Malaysia: Global Indian International School (until Class XII), Vikas International School (until Class X) and Sprout Academy (until Class V). An estimated 2,000 Malaysian students are studying in India.

India offers **40 ITEC slots** to Malaysia annually. In addition, special ITEC slots are also allotted from time to time. India also offers **20 AYUSH Scholarships** to Malaysian students for pursuing AYUSH courses in Indian institutions, apart from numerous scholarships offered by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) every year to Malaysia. In February 2026, India announced setting up of **Thiruvalluvar Scholarships** for Malaysian nationals to pursue education in India. Created in 1946, the **Indian Scholarship and Trust Fund (ISTF)** today provides one-time financial assistance to Malaysian students of Indian origin pursuing

Diploma or Bachelor courses in higher education institutions in Malaysia. Since 1996, scholarships worth over RM 3.5 million has been disbursed from the ISTF, benefiting more than 1150 Malaysian Indian students.

7. Traditional Medicine

Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homeopathy systems are practiced in Malaysia. India and Malaysia had formalized cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine in October 2010 and, a G2G MoU on Ayurveda and other traditional systems of medicine was signed in August 2024. In December 2025, a Malaysian delegation led at senior official level attended the Global Summit on Traditional Medicine jointly hosted by India and WHO. The 10th Bilateral technical meeting took place in the sidelines of the GSTM.

University Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) has an Academic Chair on Ayurveda, operationalized in September 2024 in collaboration with Institute for Technical Research in Ayurveda (ITRA), Ministry of AYUSH. The University of Cyberjaya (UoC) in Malaysia offers a Bachelor's degree in Homeopathy and has signed an MoU with Central Council for Research in Homeopathy (CCRH) in October 2025.

8. Cultural Cooperation

The Indian Cultural Centre, under ICCR was established in Kuala Lumpur in February 2010 and offers classes in carnatic vocal, kathak dance, yoga and hindi language by trained teachers from India and Malaysia. The centre was renamed as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Center (NSCBICC) by Hon'ble PM Narendra Modi in November 2015. High Commission and NSCBICC organize events aimed at promotion of Indian culture in Malaysia as also to promote India - Malaysia bilateral cultural cooperation.

ICCR and Universiti Malaya (UM) agreed for the establishment of Thiruvalluvar Chair of Indian studies at UM in September 2024, which was operationalized in October 2025 with Prof. Chellaperumal, joining the UM as the inaugural Thiruvalluvar Chair. In February 2026, Hon'ble PM of India announced that the Chair will be upgraded to a dedicated Thiruvalluvar Centre.

9. Tourism and Civil Aviation Sector Cooperation

In 2025, 1.56 million Indians visited Malaysia while it is the 6th largest source for foreign tourists to India with over 330,000 Malaysians visiting India in 2025. The growing tourism exchanges are facilitated by Malaysia's visa waiver regime for short term visit of Indian nationals from December 2023 (now extended until 31 December 2026) and India's 30-day double-entry e-Tourist visas on a gratis basis for Malaysian nationals from July 2024 (now extended until 31 December 2026). As of June 2026, **199 flights per week** operated between the two countries, covering 14 destinations in India. These are serviced by three airlines from Malaysia i.e., Malaysia Airlines, Batik Air, AirAsia, and from Indian side two airlines i.e., Air India, and IndiGo.

10. Indian Diaspora:

Malaysia is **home to an estimated 2.9 million members of the Indian diaspora**. Total number of PIOs in Malaysia is estimated at **2.75 million, making it the second largest PIO community in the world**. Approximately 90 per cent of the PIOs can be classified as of South Indian origin, including about 2 million Tamil-speaking PIOs whereas the rest speak Telugu, Malayalam and Punjabi, Gujarati, Bengali etc. It is estimated that there about **160,000 Indian nationals** are in Malaysia which includes over 47000 professionals, their dependents, 100,000 workers and 10,000 students.

Seven Malaysian PIOs have been awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman. From 50 delegates participating in 2003 to the largest delegation ever of over 500 delegates in the 2019, Malaysia has generally had a strong representation at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conventions. Malaysia is the **second country** (after Mauritius) **to celebrate Aprawasi Diwas (PIO Day), annually since 2023**, to mark the arrival of Indian migrants to this region. In October 2025, GoI **extended OCI to the descendants upto sixth generation of PIOs in Malaysia**, while also revising and simplifying the procedures being adopted to establish Indian Origin for Malaysian applicants.

Unclassified

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