

India - Singapore Relations

India-Singapore relations were elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Singapore in September 2024. With shared history, long tradition of friendship based on trust and mutual respect, and extensive cooperation across a wide range of areas, India-Singapore cooperation has deepened and diversified over the years.

Historical Connect

2. Close ties between India and Singapore have a history rooted in strong commercial, cultural and people-to-people links across a millennium. The more modern connection is attributed to Sir Stamford Raffles who, in 1819, established a trading station in Singapore on the route of the Straits of Malacca which later became a crown colony and was governed from Kolkata till 1867. The colonial connection is reflected in institutions and practices, usage of English and presence of a large Indian community. India was one of the first countries to recognize Singapore in 1965.

High-Level Exchanges

3. Prime Minister Modi has visited Singapore 5 times since he assumed office in 2014. Prime Minister paid bilateral visits to Singapore in November 2015 and May-June 2018. Prime Minister also visited Singapore in March 2015 for the funeral of Mr Lee Kuan Yew, 1st Prime Minister of Singapore and in November 2018 for ASEAN-India Summit, East Asia Summit and RCEP Leaders' Meeting. Prime Minister Modi became the 1st Indian Prime Minister to deliver keynote address at the annual Shangri La Dialogue in June 2018 and first Head of Government to deliver the keynote address at the Singapore Fintech Festival in November 2018.

4. Prime Minister visited Singapore on 04-05 September 2024. Prime Minister had meetings with Prime Minister Wong, Senior Minister (and former Prime Minister) Lee and Emeritus Senior Minister (and former Prime Minister) Goh. Prime Minister called on President Tharman. Prime Minister also interacted with Singapore business leaders and visited AEM, a Singapore company in semiconductor sector. Prime Minister Wong accompanied Prime Minister for the visit to AEM. During this visit, bilateral relations were elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, MoUs on cooperation in the areas of

Semiconductor Ecosystem, Digital Technologies, Healthcare and Skill Development were exchanged and a Joint Statement was issued.

5. Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong paid a bilateral visit to India on 03-07 October 2016. Prime Minister Lee also visited India on 25-26 January 2018 to participate in the Republic Day Celebrations and for the 2018 ASEAN India Commemorative Summit. Prime Minister Lee again visited New Delhi on 8-10 September 2023 to attend G20 Leaders' Summit. On 22 November 2023, Prime Minister Lee participated in the virtual G20 Leaders' Summit hosted by Prime Minister Modi.

6. Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Lee had meetings on the sidelines of G20 Summits in Rome (30 October 2021) and Bali (16 November 2022). On 21 February 2023, the link between India's UPI and Singapore's PayNow was officially launched in the presence of Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Lee (virtual). Prime Minister Wong joined Prime Minister Modi for the launch of the Declaration on Digital Public Infrastructure, AI and Data for Governance (which was launched by India) at the G20 Summit in Brazil in November 2024.

7. External Affairs Minister (EAM) Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Singapore in November 2021, October 2023, March 2024 and November 2024. During his visits, he had engagements with several Singaporean dignitaries, business people and Indian diaspora. EAM also accompanied Prime Minister for his visit to Singapore in September 2024. Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan visited India in June 2022 (for Special ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting) and in March 2023 (for G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting). EAM and Singapore Foreign Minister had several meetings on the sidelines of multilateral events, latest being UNGA in New York in September 2024.

India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR)

8. The inaugural meeting of the ISMR took place on 17 September 2022 in New Delhi. Four Senior Singaporean Ministers traveled to India for this meeting - Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Lawrence Wong, Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan, Transport and Trade Relations Minister S. Iswaran and Trade and Industry Minister Gan Kim Yong. From the Indian side, the delegation for the ISMR included External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Commerce and Industry Minister

Piyush Goyal. Their discussion focused on the emerging areas of cooperation such as digital connectivity, Fintech, green economy, green hydrogen, skill development and food productivity and provided an ambitious roadmap for further enhancement of India – Singapore Strategic Partnership. Deputy Prime Minister Lawrence Wong and Trade and Industry Minister Gan Kim Yong also called on Prime Minister Modi.

9. The 2nd round of ISMR was held in Singapore on 26 August 2024. Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Railways, Information and Broadcasting, and Electronics and Information Technology visited Singapore for the same. From the Singapore side, Mr. Gan Kim Yong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry, Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. K Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law, Mrs Josephine Teo, Minister for Digital Development and Information and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Dr. Tan See Leng, Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry and Mr. Chee Hong Tat, Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Finance participated in the meeting. The Ministers reviewed the progress of India – Singapore Strategic Partnership, particularly under the pillars of Digitalization, Skills Development, Sustainability, Healthcare & Medicine, identified during the 1st meeting of ISMR. It was decided to add two new pillars, Advanced Manufacturing and Connectivity for further strengthening bilateral cooperation. During their visit, the Indian Ministers also called on H.E. Mr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam, President of Singapore and H.E. Mr. Lawrence Wong, Prime Minister of Singapore.

Other engagements

10. **Parliamentary exchanges:** From 24-26 April 2022, a 12 member Indian Parliamentary Delegation, led by Speaker (Lok Sabha) Om Birla, visited Singapore. Lok Sabha Speaker had meetings with the Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore Tan Chuan-Jin and Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong. Singapore Parliament Speaker Seah Kian Peng visited India in October 2023 for P20 meeting. A delegation of PAP MPs, led by Senior Minister of State Janil Puthucheary visited India in November 2024.

11. **Ministerial visits from India:** Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal visited Singapore in September 2022. Education and Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan visited Singapore from 29 – 31 May 2023. Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V. Muraleedharan and Minister of State for External Affairs and Education Rajkumar Ranjan Singh visited Singapore in February and May 2023 respectively. NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery visited Singapore under the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Distinguished Visitors Program (DVP) on 17-18 January 2024. He met Foreign Minister Balakrishnan and other senior officials from various government agencies. Minister of State for Electronics & IT visited Singapore for participating in the Singapore International Cyber Week from 15-17 October 2024. During the visit, he had meeting with Mr Tak Kiat How, Senior Minister of State of Ministry of Digital Development and Innovation. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan visited Singapore from 20-21 October 2024. Education Minister called on Prime Minister Wong and had meetings with Singapore's DPM, Foreign Minister and Education Minister. Education Minister also visited NUS and Hwa Chong Institute. NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery met President Tharman during his visit to Singapore on 29 November 2024.

12. **Ministerial visits from Singapore:** Singapore was invited as a Guest Country under India's Presidency of G20 in 2023. 17 Singaporean Ministers participated in G20 meetings held during Indian Presidency. Former Senior Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam visited Delhi from 02-05 March 2023 to participate in the Raisina Dialogue. Minister for Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong visited Delhi from 10-13 March 2023 to launch the India- Singapore Hackathon (SIH) 2023. Minister Gan also spoke at the CII Partnership Summit. Deputy Prime Minister Lawrence Wong attended the 2023 Singapore-India Hackathon Awards Ceremony along with Union Minister of Education on 16 July 2023 in Gujarat. On 11 January 2024, Minister for Home Affairs and Law Mr. K. Shanmugam visited Chennai at the invitation of the State Government of Tamil Nadu, to be the Chief Guest at the World Tamil Diaspora Day 2024. Singapore Minister for Transport Mr Chee Hong Tat visited India on 11-12 September 2024 for the 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation, he had meetings with Minister of Civil Aviation and Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways during his visit to India. Minister for Defence Dr Ng

Eng Hen visited India on 21-23 October 2024 for the 6th round of Defence Ministers' Dialogue. He also called on Hon'ble President. Minister for Home Affairs and Law Mr K Shanmugam and Minister for Manpower Dr Tan See Leng visited India on 07-09 November 2024 for DBS Bank's anniversary event.

13. **State level visits from India:** Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel led a delegation to Singapore from 30 November – 02 December 2023, to invite the Government of Singapore to the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024. Rajasthan Minister of Industry & Commerce Col Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore visited Singapore from 07-10 October 2024 for inviting Singapore companies for Rising Rajasthan Investment Summit. During his visit, he had meetings with Mr Tan See Leng, Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade & Industry and Ms Sim Ann, Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. Odisha Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi visited Singapore on 17-20 November 2024 to promote investments in Odisha and Utkarsha Utkal Make in Odisha Summit 2025. During his visit, he had meetings with DPM Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Transport Chee Hong Tat and Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sim Ann.

14. **Senior official level visits:** Secretary (East) Saurabh Kumar and Second Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore Luke Goh co-chaired 17th Foreign Office Consultations in New Delhi on 18 September 2023. On 19 February 2024, a 10 member DPIIT delegation led by DPIIT Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh visited Singapore for "Investment and Trade Promotion Roadshow". From 19-20 February 2024, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey led a delegation for a roadshow with the financial sector investors especially from the Insurance and Re-insurance sectors. Indian delegation led by Department of Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal participated in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Ministerial meeting held in Singapore on 06 June 2024. Second Permanent Secretary Luke Goh visited India in August 2024 in preparation for ISMR and PM visit. Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Trade & Industry visited India from 03-05 November 2024, 1st round of India-Singapore Semiconductor Ecosystem Partnership Dialogue was held in Delhi on 05 November 2024.

Legal and Judicial Cooperation

15. Chief Justice of Singapore Sundaresh Menon visited India to deliver the 1st Annual Lecture at the 1st Supreme Court of India Day Celebrations on the theme "Judiciary's Role in a Changing World" on 28 January 2023. Hon'ble Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud was on an official visit to Singapore from 07-10 September 2023 for the inaugural India-Singapore Judicial Roundtable. Chief Justice of Singapore Sundaresh Menon visited Delhi in April 2024 for India-Singapore Conference on Technology, in August 2024 for 2nd India-Singapore Judicial Roundtable and to Mumbai in September 2024 and Chennai in October 2024. On 14 March 2024, India and Singapore signed an MoU on cooperation in the sphere of Law & Dispute Resolution. The MoU was signed in a virtual meeting of the Minister of State for Law and Justice (I/C) Arjun Ram Meghwal, and the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Law of Singapore Edwin Tong.

Trade and economic cooperation

16. Singapore is India's largest trade partner in ASEAN. It is the leading source of FDI, among the largest sources of External Commercial Borrowings and Foreign Portfolio Investment.

17. **Trade:** Bilateral trade expanded after the conclusion of CECA from USD 6.7 billion in FY 2004-05 to USD 35.6 billion in 2023-24. Singapore is India's 6th largest trade partner (2023-24) with a share of 3.2 % of India's overall trade. Our imports from Singapore in FY 23-24 were US\$ 21.2 billion (decline of 10.2% vis-à-vis previous year), and exports to Singapore totaled US\$ 14.4 billion (growth of 20.2 % vis-à-vis previous year).

18. **Investments:** In FY 2023-24 Singapore was the largest source of FDI into India. FDI equity inflows in India from Singapore during 2023-24 stood at US\$ 11.774 billion. The cumulative FDI inflows from Singapore to India stood at USD 167.4743 billion (April 2000– September 2024) which is 24 percent of total FDI inflows in India. Top sectors attracting FDI Equity inflows from Singapore are: Services Sector, Computer Software & Hardware, Trading, Telecommunications and Drugs & Pharmaceuticals. The outward Indian FDI to Singapore stands was USD 4.872 billion in FY 2023-24 and USD 5.92 billion in FY 2023-24 (till November 2024).

19. About 9000 Indian companies are registered in Singapore. 6 PSUs, 9 banks, CII, FICCI have their offices in Singapore. During the Prime Minister's visit to Singapore in September 2024, it was announced that Invest India will

open an office in Singapore to facilitate investments from Singapore. CIM Sh Piyush Goyal inaugurated Invest India office in Singapore on 22 September 2024. More than 440 companies from Singapore are registered in India, 2 Singapore banks (Development Bank of Singapore and United Overseas Bank), Enterprise Singapore (ES), Economic Development Board (EDB) and Singapore Tourism Board have their offices in India.

20. **Skill Development:** There is active collaboration between India and Singapore to establish skill development centers in various sectors. Skill center projects with public and private support have been completed at 6 places (Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan (Udaipur), Assam (Guwahati), Odisha (Bhubaneswar) and Telangana (Hyderabad)) and 2 projects (Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal) and Gujarat (Gandhinagar)) are ongoing. During the Prime Minister's visit in September 2024, both sides exchanged MoU on Cooperation in Education and Skill Development.

21. **Fintech:** Commercial and technical arrangements have also been worked out for the acceptance of RuPay card in Singapore. UPI-Paynow Linkage is another landmark development in the area of cross-border Fintech. Singapore is the first nation with which India has begun this cross-border Person-to-Person (P2P) payment facility. Other initiatives include ONDC - Proxtera Connectivity (making Proxtera first international buyer app connected to ONDC), GIFT Connect (collaboration between the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) and the Singapore Exchange (SGX) to create a unified liquidity pool for NIFTY products in GIFT City), Trade Trust (initiative to enable interoperable electronic Bills of Lading (eBLs) for cross-border trade finance transactions).

Defence Cooperation

22. India and Singapore have several structured defence interactions, spanning from political leadership down to staff levels of all three-armed forces, D/o Defence Production and DRDO. Defence Minister of Singapore Dr Ng Eng Hen visited India on 21-23 October 2024 for the 6th round of Defence Ministers' Dialogue. 15th round of Defence Policy Dialogue (Secretary level) was held in November 2023 in New Delhi. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar visited Singapore in May 2023.

23. There are bilateral exercises for all three services (Army – Exercise Agni Warrior, Navy – Exercise SIMBEX and Air Force – Joint Military Training). 31st

edition of SIMBEX was held in India from 23-29 October 2024. 13th edition of Ex Agni Warrior was held in India from 05 October to 11 December 2024. 12th edition of Joint Military Training was held in India on 04 October to 16 December 2024. 4th edition of Singapore-India-Thailand Maritime Exercise (SITMEX) was hosted by India in November 2024. Singapore co-hosted the inaugural ASEAN – India Maritime Exercise in Singapore in 2023. Singapore participated in all editions of biennial Exercise Milan since its inception in 1995. In 2024, a total of four Indian Navy ships and one Indian Coast Guard ship visited Singapore for operational turn around/ goodwill visits. Indian Air Force Sarang Helicopter Display team participated in Singapore Air Show 2024 (held in February 2024). Military professionals from both countries undergo short and long term courses under several exchange programs.

S&T Cooperation

24. ISRO has launched several Singaporean satellites, Singapore's first indigenous built micro-satellite in 2011, 2 more in 2014, 6 in 2015 and 9 in 2023. Singapore co-hosted inaugural ASEAN – India Women Scientists Conclave in April 2024. India and Singapore held an e-workshop in the area of digital health and medical technologies in July 2024 and in the area of green economy in September 2024. During the Prime Minister's visit to Singapore in September 2024, both sides decided to set up a Cyber Policy Dialogue, inaugural dialogue was held in Singapore in October 2024. During the Prime Minister's visit in September 2024, both sides exchanged MoU on Cooperation in Digital Technologies and decided to explore cooperation in the areas of critical and emerging technologies.

Cultural cooperation

25. There are regular cultural exchanges in the spheres of performing arts, theatre, museum exchanges, art, languages, and youth exchanges between India and Singapore. Singapore's large Indian diaspora, through a number of cultural societies, actively promotes Indian art forms in Singapore. During the visit of Prime Minister Modi to Singapore in September 2024, it was announced that Thiruvalluvar Cultural Center will be set up in Singapore to promote bilateral cultural exchanges.

Multilateral cooperation

26. Singapore has joined International Solar Alliance (In June 2023) and Global Bio-fuel Alliance (September 2023). Singapore was ASEAN Country

Coordinator for India for period 2021-24, during which India-ASEAN relations were upgraded to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Singapore supported the Indian initiative of the Declaration on Digital Public Infrastructure, AI and Data for Governance (at the G20 Summit in Brazil in November 2024).

Indian Community

27. Ethnic Indians constitute about 9% or around 3.8 lakhs of the resident population of 4.19 million in Singapore. In addition, among the 1.86 million foreigners residing in Singapore, about 20% or around 3.8 lakhs are Indian expatriates, mostly serving in financial services, IT, construction and marine sectors or are students. Singapore has the highest concentration of IIT and IIM alumni in any one city outside India. Tamil is one of the four official languages of Singapore. Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, Bengali and Punjabi are also offered in schools. Mr. Piyush Gupta, CEO, DBS Bank Singapore was conferred with 2023 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award in the Business Category.

January 2025