

Malaysia National Day Special

Bilateral momentum grows as collaboration diversifies

AHMAD ROZIAN ABD GHANI
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE OF MALAYSIA



As Malaysia commemorates the 69th anniversary of its National Day on Aug. 31, I extend my greetings to all Malaysians and friends of Malaysia in Japan. This occasion is a time to celebrate our nation's journey and reflect on the partnerships that support our progress.

Malaysia's development agenda is guided by the concept of "Malaysia Madani," which is based on sustainability, compassion, respect, innovation, prosperity and trust. These values underpin efforts to build an inclusive, resilient and forward-looking nation, ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared across society. The concept emphasizes balanced development, combining material progress with spiritual values.

Among our key partnerships is our relationship with Japan. Malaysia and Japan established diplomatic relations on the very day of Malaysia's independence, giving our bilateral ties a unique foundation. The Look East Policy, introduced in 1982, has also played a pivotal role in shaping Malaysia's development trajectory.

Over the decades, this relationship has evolved, turning into a comprehensive strategic partnership in December 2023. Today, Malaysian-Japanese relations are supported by regular high-level exchanges, economic and trade linkages and cooperation in education, tourism, science and technology, defense and security, human resource development and other areas.

This broad cooperation continues to provide benefits to both nations.

The visit of Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi to Malaysia in October 2025 in conjunction with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit and related summits in Kuala Lumpur marked an important milestone. As her first overseas visit as prime minister, it reflected the momentum of our bilateral engagement and our shared commitment to regional stability and prosperity.

This momentum was reinforced by the official visit of Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim to Japan in June. The visit provided an opportunity to review the progress of the Malaysia-Japan comprehensive strategic partnership and identify new avenues for cooperation.

Discussions covered trade and investment, energy security and transition, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, critical minerals, supply chain resilience, defense and maritime security and people-to-people exchanges. Both countries also reaffirmed their commitment to addressing regional and global challenges and contributing to peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.

Economic collaboration remains a key component of the partnership. In 2025, Malaysia's exports to Japan reached approximately \$17.82 billion (¥2.8 trillion), while Japan's exports to Malaysia amounted to about \$15.57 billion. This underscores the continued importance of Japan as one of Malaysia's key economic partners.

Malaysia's exports to Japan include liquefied natural gas, electrical and electronic products, machinery and agricultural products such as palm oil. LNG remains an important part of energy cooperation, reflecting Malaysia's role as a key supplier to Japan.

Japan's exports to Malaysia, particularly in machinery, transport equipment and advanced technologies, continue to support Malaysia's industrial development.

Japan is also one of the largest sources of foreign direct investment in Malaysia, with cumulative investments exceeding \$40 billion across sectors such as manufacturing, services and high-value industries. This supports employment, technology transfer and capacity building. This mutually beneficial exchange highlights the complementarities of our economic partnership.

At the regional level, Malaysia and Japan cooperate through ASEAN-led mechanisms on economic integration, sustainable development and regional stability. Malaysia remains committed to a peaceful, inclusive and rules-based Indo Pacific, in close collaboration with partners such as Japan.

People-to-people ties are equally important. Japanese students continue to show interest in learning the Malaysian language alongside expanding exchanges in education, culture and tourism.

As we progress through Visit Malaysia 2026, I welcome the momentum achieved thus far. Tourist arrivals, including those from Japan, have shown growth, reflecting stronger connectivity and interest in Malaysia. We will continue to strengthen tourism as a pillar of bilateral engagement beyond 2026, while encouraging greater exchanges between our peoples and communities.

Looking ahead, I am confident that Malaysia-Japan relations will continue to flourish. There remains significant potential to expand collaboration in areas such as energy transition, digital innovation, food security and sustainable development. In an increasingly complex global environment, such partnerships are more important than ever.



Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim poses with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi at the Cabinet Office during his official visit to Japan on June 10.
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE OF MALAYSIA / IZZUDDIN ABD RADZAK



Saloma Link Bridge is a pedestrian and cycling span with a design inspired by betel nut leaf arrangements. TOURISM MALAYSIA



This digital illustration depicts the sprawling tea plantations of the Cameron Highlands. TOURISM MALAYSIA

Four Decades of Partnership. A Future Shaped Together.

Across more than four decades, PETRONAS and our partners in Japan have forged a partnership founded on trust, deep respect and a belief in progress.

Built on mutual aspirations, this partnership continues to open new opportunities and create value that extends beyond industries and borders.

As we celebrate Malaysia National Day, we honor this enduring partnership and look ahead to continuing this meaningful journey toward a more resilient and sustainable future together.

Congratulations on the Anniversary of the Independence of Malaysia



President: Tsuyoshi Nagano
Vice President: Masayuki Hyodo

c/o The Japan and Tokyo Chambers of Commerce and Industry
Marunouchi Nijubashi Bldg., 3-2-2 Marunouchi,
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Congratulations on the Anniversary of the Independence of Malaysia

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Malaysia National Day Special

Forging a future-oriented partnership

TSUYOSHI NAGANO
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-MALAYSIA
ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION



On behalf of the Japan-Malaysia Economic Association, I would like to express our sincerest congratulations to the government and people of Malaysia on the 69th anniversary of the country's independence.

Considering growing global uncertainty, the relationship between Malaysia and Japan is becoming ever more important. To reflect our emphasis on bilateral ties, last October, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi decided to visit Kuala Lumpur on her first overseas trip since taking office. Similarly, from the Malaysian side, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim visited Japan in June.

A roundtable meeting with the business community was held during his stay, and I was honored to participate as president of

JAMECA and discuss future business cooperation between our countries.

Let me take this opportunity to briefly introduce JAMECA. It was established in 1977 under the endorsement of both countries' prime ministers for the purpose of enhancing mutual understanding and goodwill between our economic circles and promoting trade, investment, economic cooperation, tourism and culture.

Since its establishment, we have been holding annual joint conferences with our counterpart, the Malaysia-Japan Economic Association, and exchanging opinions on various topics on Malaysia-Japan relations. The Joint Conference between JAMECA and MAJECA has been held alternately in Japan and Malaysia almost every year since 1977.

This year, we will hold our 43rd Joint Conference on Sept. 1 in Kuala Lumpur. The main theme is "Malaysia-Japan Strategic Economic Partnership: Advancing Transformation, Deepening Partnerships and Strengthening Resilience." Under this theme, we will focus on three key topics for the plenary sessions: advancing technology

and industrial transformation, deepening new value chain partnerships and strengthening supply chain resilience.

As we look ahead to next year, which marks the momentous 70th anniversary of Japan-Malaysia diplomatic relations and the 50th anniversary of JAMECA and MAJECA, this year's program focuses on the future-oriented "co-creation" partnership between the business communities of Malaysia and Japan.

I am confident that this conference will significantly contribute to the further development of our economic cooperation, and I hope many people from both countries will participate.

Once again, I would like to extend my congratulations to Malaysia on the anniversary of its independence, along with my sincerest wishes for Malaysia's continued development and prosperity in the future.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Putra Mosque stands next to Putra Square, which is decorated with a symbol of unity. TOURISM MALAYSIA



Anwar delivers a speech at the University of Tokyo on June 9. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE / IZZUDDIN ABD RAZAK



Mount Kinabalu rises 4,095 meters above the island of Borneo. TOURISM MALAYSIA

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*on the Anniversary
of the Independence
of Malaysia*

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