



## India-Singapore Ties

**For Prelims:** [India and Singapore](#), [Straits of Malacca](#), Foreign Direct Investment, [Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement \(CECA\)](#), SIMBEX, India's Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)

**For Mains:** India and Singapore Relations.

### Why in News?

The **Union Education Minister of India** recently embarked on a **three-day visit to Singapore** with the aim of **strengthening existing ties and exploring opportunities** for widening bilateral engagement in education and skill development.



## What are the Key Highlights of the Meeting?

- **The Union Education Minister** met various key Ministers of the Singaporean Government and visited Spectra Secondary School.
  - It includes a constructive meeting with **DPM & Minister for Finance, Singapore, on strengthening cooperation and focusing on skill development.**
  - The meeting emphasized **creating opportunities for lifelong learning, building a future-ready workforce, and making knowledge and skill development a key pillar of strategic partnership.**
- The minister highlighted the **[National Education Policy \(NEP\) 2020](#)** and its focus on **vocational education, market relevance of training,** and integration of skills qualifications framework with higher education qualification framework.
- The Minister stressed **on learning from the best practices of Singapore, collaborate and customize it to meet Indian needs.**

## How are India's Relations with Singapore?

- **Background:**
  - The 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 relationship 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 governed from Kolkata till 1867.**
    - After independence, **India was one of the first countries to recognize Singapore in 1965.**
- **Trade and Economic Cooperation:**
  - **Singapore is among India's largest trade and investment partners in ASEAN** and accounted for 27.3 % of our overall trade with ASEAN in 2021-22.
    - Singapore is also the leading source of **[Foreign Direct Investment into India.](#)**
    - Over the last 20 years the total investment into India from Singapore is almost 136.653 billion and accounts for nearly **23% of the total FDI inflows.**
  - The **[Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement \(CECA\)](#) between India and Singapore was signed in 2005.**
    - India and Singapore have also collaborated on several initiatives to promote trade and investment, such as the India-Singapore Business Forum and the **India-Singapore CEOs Forum.**
  - Recently, India's **[Unified Payments Interface \(UPI\)](#)** and Singapore's PayNow have been integrated in **February 2023 to enable faster [Remittances](#) between the two countries.**
- **Defence and Security Cooperation:**
  - Both countries share common concerns about regional stability and maritime security in the **[Indo-Pacific region.](#)**
    - In 2015, they elevated their relationship to a **Strategic Partnership on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.**
  - They have also signed several agreements to enhance their defence ties, such as the **Defence Cooperation Agreement (2003) and the Naval Cooperation Agreement (2017).**
    - **Military Exercises:**
      - **Navy: [SIMBEX](#)**
      - **Air Force: SINDEX**
      - **Army: Bold Kurukshetra**
- **Education, Science and Technology Cooperation:**
  - The **28<sup>th</sup> edition of the DST-CII India-Singapore Technology Summit** was held in February 2022.
    - It highlighted collaboration of India and Singapore in **AI, IoT, fintech, healthcare, biotech, smart manufacturing, green mobility, logistic and supply chain solutions, smart manufacturing, and sustainable urban development.**
  - **[ISRO](#) also launched Singapore's first indigenously built micro-satellite in 2011.**

- Singapore is looking at collaborating with India in the area of digital public infrastructure on the lines of a **national identity system like Aadhaar.**
  - Another potential opportunity could be the **integration of Singapore's 'Proxtera' (global digital hub of MSME ecosystems) with India's Open Network for Digital Commerce** (ONDC)
- **Cultural and People-to-People Ties:** Both countries share a rich heritage of cultural diversity, linguistic affinity and religious harmony.
  - Ethnic Indians constitute about 9.1% or around 3.5 lakhs of the resident population of 3.9 million in Singapore. They have contributed significantly to Singapore's economic development, social fabric and cultural diversity.
  - **ASEAN-India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)** was held in Singapore on 6-7 January 2018 as part of commemoration of 25 years of ASEAN-India Partnership, with the theme, **"Ancient Route, New Journey"**.
- **Cooperation in Infrastructure Development:**
  - Singapore's expertise in infrastructure development, smart cities, and urban planning aligns with **India's goals of sustainable development and building smart cities.**
    - Singaporean companies have been actively involved in infrastructure projects in India, including the development of **industrial parks, airports, and urban infrastructure.**

### UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

**Q. Consider the following pairs: (2009)**

Organization Location of Headquarters

1. Asian Development : Tokyo Bank
2. Asia-Pacific : Singapore Economic Cooperation
3. Association of South East Asian Nations: Bangkok

**Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?**

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 3 only

**Ans: (b)**

**Q. What is the correct sequence of occurrence of the following cities in South-East Asia as one proceeds from south to north? (2014)**

1. Bangkok
2. Hanoi
3. Jakarta
4. Singapore

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

- (a) 4 - 2 - 1 - 3
- (b) 3 - 2 - 4 - 1
- (c) 3 - 4 - 1 - 2
- (d) 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

**Ans: (c)**

[Source: PIB](#)

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