

= Malaysia ? Vietnam relations =

Malaysia ? Vietnam relations (Malay Hubungan Malaysia @-@ Vietnam ; Vietnamese : Quan h? Malaysia @-@ Vi?t Nam) date to at least the 15th century . Malaysia forged diplomatic ties with the modern @-@ day Vietnamese state on 30 March 1973 ; as of 2015 , these ties are still in existence . During the late 1970s and 1980s , the countries ' relationship became strained as a result of the Cambodian ? Vietnamese War and the influx of Vietnamese boat people into Malaysia . The subsequent resolution of these issues saw the cultivation of strong trade and economic ties , and bilateral trade between the countries grew exponentially , with an expansion into areas including information technology , education and defence .

Vietnam and Malaysia share a maritime border in the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea , and have overlapping claims in the Spratly Islands . Both have an embassy located in the other 's capital ; Vietnam has an embassy in Kuala Lumpur , and Malaysia has an embassy in Hanoi and a consulate office in Ho Chi Minh City . Historical records show that Vietnamese people have visited states and Sultanates comprising modern @-@ day Malaysia in small numbers since the 18th century , and Malaysia is currently home to a large Vietnamese expatriate community consisting of migrant workers , mail order brides and students , numbering around 100 @,@ 000 people . Vietnam also hosts a small Malaysian expatriate community , consisting mostly of businessmen based in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi .

= = History = =

= = = Early contacts (15th to 18th century) = = =

The earliest record of diplomatic contact between present @-@ day Malaysia and Vietnam dates back to 1469 . Soldiers of Vietnamese Later Le dynasty had captured a Malaccan tributary mission en route to the Chinese Ming dynasty , killing some of them , and castrating and enslaving the survivors . Tonkin expressed their intent to conquer Malacca ; this intent was conveyed to the Chinese emperor in a later mission in 1481 . The Chinese emperor ordered Malacca to raise soldiers in the event of a similar attack . Malacca defeated the Vietnamese during an invasion of Lan Xang as reported in a Chinese account . The Malay Annals also mention a Cham prince taking some of his followers to form a small Cham colony in Malacca when Vietnam invaded Champa in 1471 , and deploying military assistance to Johor to fend off a botched military conquest in the 1590s . In the mid 17th @-@ century , the Cham vassal states Panduranga and Kelantan cultivated close diplomatic ties when they led a long @-@ term diplomatic mission to Kelantan to learn more about Malay culture and Islam . Subsequent Champa kings after Po Rome , beginning with his son Po Saut , periodically received Malay Muslim missionaries from Kelantan in the 17th and 18th centuries .

= = = British colonial era (18th to mid @-@ 20th century) = = =

Not long after Penang was established as a port by the British at the end of the 18th century , Vietnamese junks began to visit the area for trade at the instruction of the Vietnamese emperor in Hue . An early account in the late 1790s showed Nguyen Anh 's (who became Emperor Gia Long) merchant ship docking in Penang carrying cargoes of sugarcane en route to India . Soldiers referred to Penang in its Sino @-@ Vietnamese terminology , Tân Lang d? (Chinese character : ???) ; a royal narrative in 1810 showed the Vietnamese began to refer to Penang as Cù lao Cau , meaning Palm Island . Vietnamese Catholics travelled to Penang for seminary studies from the 1840s ; these included illuminary Pétrus Ky. ethnic Chinese from Cochinchina sailed to the east in the Sultanate of Terengganu to trade in poultry and rice ; some also settled there and assimilated with the local Chinese .

In the late 1920s and early 1930s , Ho Chi Minh played a key role in facilitating the formation of the

Nanyang Communist Party ? later renamed the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) ? and visited Malaya on several occasions , such as presiding over a ceremony to mark the formation of the Malayan Communist Party in Buloh Kasap , Johor , in April 1930 . Ho Chi Minh 's influence on the MCP paved the way for Lai Teck , who was also of Vietnamese origin , to be appointed as the MCP 's Secretary General between 1934 and 1938 . Collaboration and communications between the MCP and the Vietnamese Communists increased following Lai Teck 's disappearance in the late 1940s ; the MCP briefly facilitated the shipping and transport of light ammunitions to the Viet Minh around this time . During World War II , both the Viet Minh and Malayan Peoples ' Anti @-@ Japanese Army (MPAJA) opposed the Japanese invasion of French Indochina and Malaya . Closer ties between communist cadres from Malaya and Vietnam were forged following successful efforts by the Communist victory at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 ; the Viet Minh provided small @-@ scale logistical and communication support and training to the MCP in the 1950s and 1960s .

= = = Vietnamese refugees (1975 to 2005) = = =

In May 1975 , shortly after the Fall of Saigon at the end of the Vietnam War , the first Vietnamese refugees arrived in Malaysia , and the first boat that arrived carried 47 refugees . Until 1978 , more Vietnamese fled their country , and many of them were of Chinese descent . According to Malaysian government statistics , the country hosted 19 @,@ 000 refugees in November 1978 , compared to 500 in 1977 . The Malaysian government responded by directing its Home Ministry to set up Federal Task Force VII in 1978 , which was tasked with limiting the rising number of refugees from landing in Malaysia . The press reported incidents of Malaysian police and army personnel turning away the refugees , but some refugees resorted to deliberately sinking their boats to gain admittance to Malaysia . When the government was informed of boat @-@ sinking attempts made by the refugees , then Deputy Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad announced in June 1979 that legislation would be introduced to empower the police and navy to shoot refugees attempting to land . Mahathir 's superior , Prime Minister Hussein Onn quickly recanted Mahathir 's shooting threat .

The first Vietnamese refugee camp was opened in Pulau Bidong in August 1978 with United Nations assistance ; the island accommodated up to 25 @,@ 000 refugees . Other refugee camps were set up at Pulau Tengah , Pulau Besar , Kota Bharu , Kuantan , Sarawak and Sabah . In 1982 , a transit centre was established at Sungei Besi , where refugees awaiting deportation to Western countries that were willing to accept them would be housed . The number of Vietnamese refugee arrivals fluctuated between 1981 and 1983 , before a period of significant decrease from 1984 to 1986 . In 1987 , Malaysia and other neighbouring countries saw a sudden increase in the number of Vietnamese refugees landing in Malaysia . At an ASEAN summit in June 1987 , member countries chastised the Vietnamese government for not having sufficiently addressed the refugee problem .

In August 1988 , Malaysia and Vietnam jointly proposed an involuntary repatriation agreement , which provided for Vietnamese refugees that failed to gain admittance to Western countries to be counselled to return to Vietnam . A few Vietnamese government delegations were deployed to conduct outreach sessions at some of the refugee camps . This arrangement was considered unsuccessful because less than 40 individuals registered for the voluntary repatriation programme between 1988 and 1989 . A deadline was set for 14 March 1989 , whereby all Vietnamese who arrived before that date would automatically be considered refugees and all refugees arriving after that date would undergo a screening process to assess whether they qualified for refugee status . The screening process was proposed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in June 1988 ; it involved thorough background checks on arrivals to determine whether they qualify for refugee status to be sent to any Western countries that were willing to accept them . Within 10 months , 4 @,@ 000 of 9 @,@ 000 refugees were sent to Western countries . In the same period , an additional 11 @,@ 000 refugees arrived in Malaysia .

The implementation of stringent rules that require Vietnamese arrivals to qualify for refugee status prompted some of them to opt for the voluntary repatriation programme ; between 1 @,@ 000 and 2 @,@ 000 arrivals to Malaysia returned to Vietnam in 1989 . Refugees who opted to return to Vietnam were provided with a monthly stipend for up to one year by the UNHCR . In the early 1990s

, as Vietnam began to experience economic growth , the number of refugee arrivals to Malaysia dropped . Joint collaborations between Malaysia , Vietnam and UNHCR to address the problem enabled Malaysia to reduce the size of its Vietnamese refugee populace , facilitating the closure of the Pulau Bidong refugee camp in November 1991 . 3 @, @ 000 Vietnamese refugees participated in the voluntary repatriation programme , and Malaysia 's refugee populace reduced to 6 @, @ 000 by 1994 . Most of the remaining arrivals were not able to pass the UNHCR screening process and were classified as illegal immigrants . The majority of them expressed their reluctance to be repatriated to Vietnam ; demonstrations and rioting broke out when news of the camp 's impending closure was announced in 1995 . Sungei Besi refugee camp was later closed in June 1996 . The last refugees returned to Vietnam in 2005 .

= = Diplomatic ties = =

Malaysia established diplomatic ties with North Vietnam on 31 March 1973 at the ambassadorial level after the Paris Peace Accords were signed that year . An agreement between the ambassadors of Malaysia and Vietnam was reached in 1975 . The following year , Malaysia first opened its embassy in Hanoi , while Vietnam also opened its embassy in Kuala Lumpur on 29 May 1976 . In the mid to late 1970s , bilateral ties were strained as Malaysia pressured Vietnam to embrace the ZOPFAN concept , which the latter interpreted as a version of the anti @-@ communist containment policy . During a bilateral summit in August 1977 , Malaysia 's Prime Minister Hussein Onn made promises to provide economic and technical assistance to rebuild Vietnam 's war @-@ torn economy . When Vietnam invaded Cambodia in 1979 , many Vietnamese sought refuge in Malaysia from that time onwards and into the 1980s , and caused economic and national security problems to Malaysia especially to its racial balance as most the Vietnamese refugees resemble the Chinese people . Bilateral ties normalised from 1988 onwards , when Vietnam announced plans to withdraw from Cambodia . In the early 1990s , government leaders of both countries held several diplomatic visits and summits , which produced many agreements that emphasised economic co @-@ operation and development . Strengthening ties also saw the opening of a consulate office in Ho Chi Minh City in January 1991 . Vietnam expressed its interest in joining ASEAN with Malaysia 's support in 1994 as the countries continued to foster close economic ties . Vietnam joined ASEAN in 1995 ; its entry was warmly welcomed by Malaysia .

In the 1990s , bilateral ties were characterised by trade and economic co @-@ operation ; other areas of bilateral co @-@ operation were explored from 2000 onwards . In that year , Vietnam and Malaysia reached an agreement on bilateral efforts on law enforcement and suppressing the trans @-@ national drug trade . In 2004 , three Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) in the areas of information technology , education and diplomatic ties , and co @-@ operation @-@ in @-@ general were signed . Bilateral co @-@ operation between both countries was also extended to defence matters in 2008 when another MoU was signed , which proposed for joint military trainings and collaboration in the defence industry between the Malaysian and Vietnamese militaries . The MoU also provided for the navies of both countries to prevent Vietnamese fishermen from encroaching into Malaysian waters for fishing activities as well as to control piracy .

= = Relations with South Vietnam (1959 to 1975) = =

Relations with the former state of South Vietnam were established when South Vietnam recognised the Federation of Malaya 's independence on 1957 . Since then , Malaya was providing aid to the South Vietnamese regime in its fight against the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army . Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman made a first visit on 1958 which was reciprocated twice by the South Vietnamese President Ngô ?inh Di?m on 28 ? 31 January 1958 and in October 1961 . By 1963 , when Malaya transformed into Malaysia (with an additional territory in the island of Borneo) , the main government in Kuala Lumpur worried the influence of North Vietnamese communists would threaten its existence in accordance to the Domino theory , thus changing its position to become very supportive of the American involvement in the Vietnam War as Malaysia also have experienced

a communist insurgency of its own . Tunku Abdul Rahman then expressed these concerns in December 1966 and called on the United States and the United Kingdom to provide increased logistical support to war efforts in Vietnam . Malaysia hosted training courses in public administration and jungle warfare for government officials , and provided motorcycles to bolster the South Vietnamese police and military logistical capabilities . Towards the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 , Malaysia closed its embassy in Saigon in two stages ; first it withdrew the embassy dependants on 12 April 1975 , before a complete closure 16 days later ? two days before the fall of Saigon . Malaysia had also extended recognition to the short @-@ lived Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam within days of its formation in May 1975 , citing Malaysia 's impartial position on political ideology and social system .

= = Embassy = =

The Embassy of Malaysia in Hanoi is currently located at 43 @-@ 45 Dien Bien Phu Street , where it has been located since 2004 . Malaysia also has a Consular Office in Ho Chi Minh City that was opened in 1991 , and its executive functions were later upgraded to that of Consular @-@ General one year later . The Malaysian embassy in Hanoi has shifted three times since 1976 :

Thong Nhat Hotel (later renamed Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi) , 1976 ? 1983

Van Phuc Diplomatic Compound , 1983 ? 1984

Fortuna Hotel Hanoi , 1984 ? 2004

The Vietnamese embassy in Kuala Lumpur is located at 4 Persiaran Stonor and was opened in 1976 through the acquisition of the former South Vietnamese embassy . The Vietnamese embassy also has separate offices catering to labour and defence matters in two separate locations within Kuala Lumpur set up in the 2000s . In February 2013 , the Vietnamese embassy secured the purchase of 0 @. @ 69 hectares (2 acres) of land in Precinct 15 , Putrajaya , that would be used for the construction and subsequent relocation of the Vietnamese embassy .

= = Economy and trade = =

Bilateral trade between Malaysia and Vietnam stood at US \$ 2 @. @ 2 million following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 . Within the first three years after the war , Malaysia proposed to extend economic and technical assistance to Vietnam 's oil palm and rubber industries . Malaysia exported zinc to Vietnam and signed a contract that would facilitate the import of Vietnamese vegetables into Malaysia . These early co @-@ operations and proposals ended following Vietnam 's invasion of Cambodia in 1979 . Economic co @-@ operation slowly resumed from 1988 , when bilateral trade between the countries stood at \$ 50 million . In 1990 , bilateral trade increased to \$ 140 million and to \$ 235 million in 1991 . Around this time , Malaysian businessmen began to open hotels in Vung Tau to cater to its flourishing tourism industry . At a bilateral summit in 1992 , both countries agreed on the idea of joint oil and gas exploration ; Vietnam has a sizeable number of oil fields in the South China Sea .

Around this time , Malaysian statutory boards and government @-@ linked companies including Bank Negara , MIDAS and Petronas started to provide technical assistance programmes to Vietnam . Vietnam also sought Malaysia 's assistance to develop its banking sector ; Malaysia 's Public Bank formed joint ventures with VID bank (later BIDV bank) to open branches in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City between 1993 and 1994 . By 1994 , Malaysia became ASEAN 's second largest investor in Vietnam . Exports from Vietnam to Malaysia mainly consisted of rice , rubber , oil seeds and machinery , while Malaysia exported machinery , equipment and chemicals mainly derived from the former 's economic assistance to the country . Malaysian businessmen were responsible for the development of the An Don Export Processing Zone beginning in 1994 in Danang . At an APEC meeting in 1994 , Malaysia 's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad spoke of the belief that Malaysia did not need to be totally self @-@ reliant in food , and expressed his interest in procuring some food from Vietnam as a means of strengthening economic ties . Two years later , Malaysian @-@ made Proton Wira cars were first sold in Vietnam .

A joint commission meeting between the countries in 1996 brought skilled and semi-skilled workers entering Vietnam from Malaysia from that time onwards . Between 2002 and 2003 , the first wave of Vietnamese workers arrived in Malaysia to provide labour for its expanding manufacturing sector . By 2003 , there were 67 000 Vietnamese workers in Malaysia ; both countries signed a memorandum of understanding exempting unskilled Vietnamese workers from needing a sufficient grasp of English or the Malay language to qualify for employment . The number of Vietnamese work permit holders increased slightly to 80 000 - 90 000 by 2011 ; their presence later extended to other sectors including construction , housekeeping , agriculture and the service sector . A few Vietnamese workers found employment in Chinese restaurants as waiters , and learnt to speak some Chinese as well .

In 2015 , Malaysia was the largest ASEAN 's investor in Vietnam with total pledges of US \$ 2 . 47 billion . Malaysia and Vietnam have signed a joint statement on strategic partnership in economic matters along with a memorandum of understanding on joint patrol , hotline contact , search and rescue co-ordination , and piracy prevention in the South China Sea .

= = Social developments = =

A sizeable number of Malaysian men have foreign wives especially with Vietnamese women . Accounts of such marriages first surfaced in the 1990s , but in the 2000s these marriages became especially popular with older Chinese Malaysian men . A thriving matchmaking industry in which prospective grooms could select Vietnamese brides based on road shows and profiling methods has developed . Malaysian spouses cited the inability to find a local spouse because of career commitments and cultural affinity between Chinese Malaysians and Vietnamese as their main motivations for finding a Vietnamese wife . Such unions have faced considerable issues , such as language barriers , cases in which wives abandon their Malaysian spouses and take their mixed-race children back to Vietnam , and extortion . A Chinese community leader , Michael Chong , said the key reason for runaway Vietnamese brides was their inability to adapt to Malaysian life and society , and that many of the women married to escape poverty in their homeland .

Malaysia is home to almost 100 000 Vietnamese nationals , mostly concentrated in the industrial hubs in the West Malaysian states of Penang , Negeri Sembilan , Selangor and Johor . Vietnamese migrant workers have occasionally been mistreated by employers , and have faced overcrowded dormitories , salary deductions and physical abuse at work . A sizeable number of crimes in Malaysia , including robbery , rape , murder , and prostitution , have been attributed to the Vietnamese community . In 2008 , the then Inspector-General of the Malaysian police Musa Hassan , said the Malaysian police had handled more than 200 cases of crimes involving the Vietnamese community in 2008 . Vietnamese women are common in the Malaysian prostitution trade , Malaysian clients have attributed their popularity to their alluring physique and good hospitality practices . Some Vietnamese prostitutes have reportedly resorted to registering false student passes or false marriages with local men to gain employment in this trade ; many were forced into prostitution after being tricked by unscrupulous agents promising them employment as waitresses or factory workers in Malaysia .