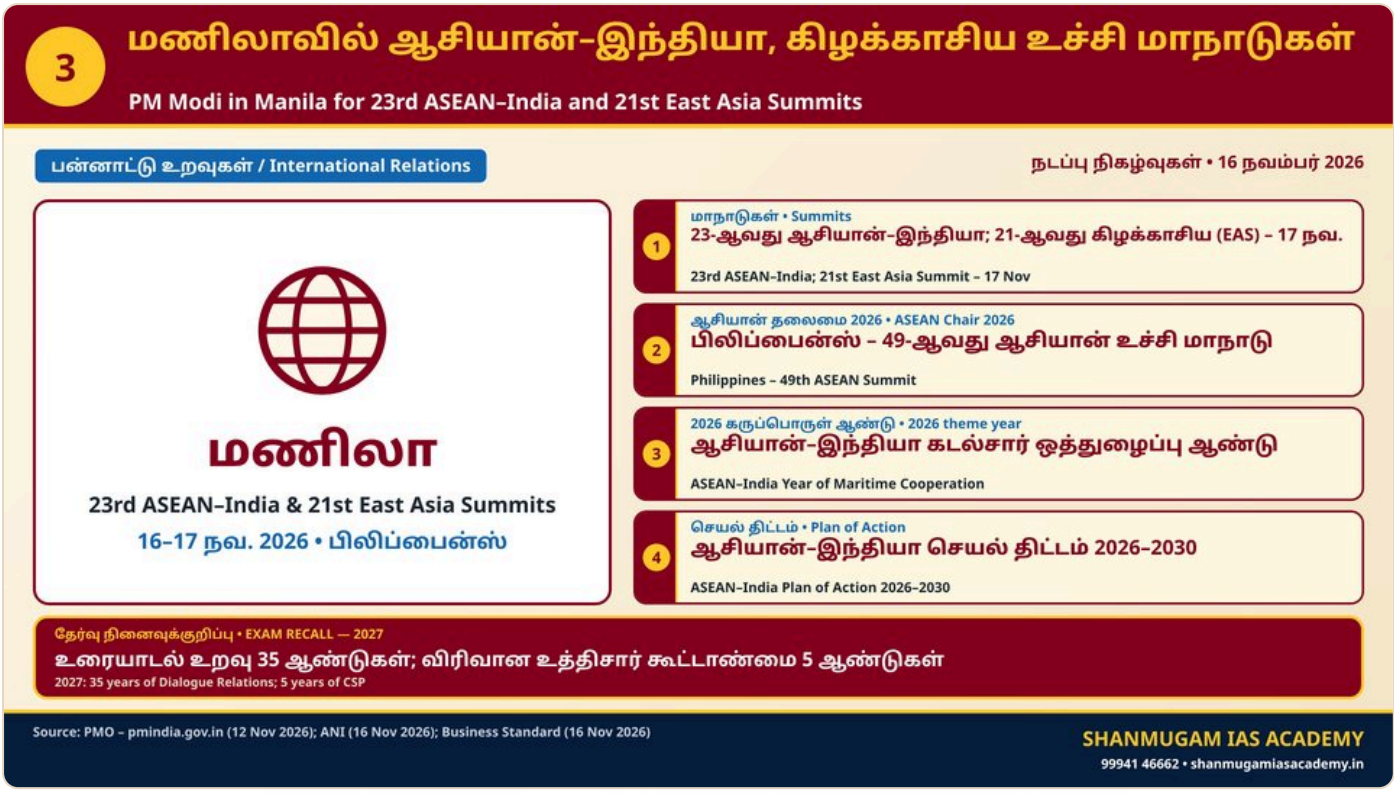
PM Modi in Manila for 23rd ASEAN–India and 21st East Asia Summits

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News

At the invitation of Philippine President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., Prime Minister Narendra Modi left for Manila on 16 November 2026. The PMO said he will attend the 23rd ASEAN–India Summit and the 21st East Asia Summit (EAS) on 17 November. The Philippines, ASEAN Chair for 2026, is hosting the 49th ASEAN Summit and related summits. The meetings will review the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and the ASEAN–India Plan of Action 2026–2030. 2026 is the ASEAN–India Year of Maritime Cooperation; 2027 will mark 35 years of Dialogue Relations and five years of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. In his departure statement the PM said ASEAN is 'at the heart of India's Act East Policy'. ANI said the review of the ASEAN–India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) is also on the agenda.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Visit	16–17 Nov 2026, Manila, Philippines
Summits	23rd ASEAN–India; 21st East Asia Summit – 17 Nov
ASEAN Chair 2026	Philippines – 49th ASEAN Summit
Host	President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

Point	Details
2026 theme year	ASEAN–India Year of Maritime Cooperation
Plan of Action	ASEAN–India Plan of Action 2026–2030
2027	35 years of Dialogue Relations; 5 years of CSP
Previous summit	22nd ASEAN–India – 26 Oct 2025 (PM joined virtually)

Background

- ASEAN history: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations was founded on 8 August 1967 through the Bangkok Declaration by five countries – Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Its Secretariat is in Jakarta. Timor-Leste became the 11th member in October 2025. The chair rotates every year in alphabetical order.
- India–ASEAN ties: 'Look East Policy' in 1991; sectoral dialogue partner in 1992; full dialogue partner in 1995; summit level in 2002; goods trade agreement (AITIGA) signed in 2009; Strategic Partnership in 2012; 'Act East Policy' in 2014; Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2022. ASEAN is one of India's major trading partners. The PM's departure statement also says ASEAN has a central place in India's MAHASAGAR vision (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions), which he announced in Mauritius in March 2025, widening the earlier SAGAR vision.
- East Asia Summit (EAS): The first summit was held in Kuala Lumpur on 14 December 2005; India has taken part from the start. With the ASEAN members, India, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the US and Russia take part; the US and Russia joined in 2011. Maritime security, energy and disaster management are key themes.
- Geography: The Philippines is an archipelago of over 7,000 islands in the western Pacific; its capital is Manila. India–Philippines ties were raised to a Strategic Partnership in August 2025; the Philippines was the first foreign buyer of the BrahMos missile.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has had sea links with South-East Asia since Chola times. Tamil is one of Singapore's four official languages, and Malaysia has a large Tamil community with Tamil schools. With 2026 the Year of Maritime Cooperation, the summit also matters for Tamil Nadu ports such as Chennai and Thoothukudi (V.O. Chidambaranar).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

At the invitation of Philippine President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., Prime Minister Narendra Modi left for Manila on 16 November 2026. The PMO said he will attend the 23rd ASEAN–India Summit and the 21st East Asia Summit (EAS) on 17 November.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Visit: 16–17 Nov 2026, Manila, Philippines; Summits: 23rd ASEAN–India; 21st East Asia Summit – 17 Nov; ASEAN Chair 2026: Philippines – 49th ASEAN Summit; Host: President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

What is the background to this news?

ASEAN history: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations was founded on 8 August 1967 through the Bangkok Declaration by five countries – Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. ASEAN was founded in 1967 through a declaration signed in which city?

A) Jakarta

B) Manila

C) Hanoi

D) Bangkok

Answer: D – Explanation: Bangkok Declaration (8 Aug 1967) – five founding nations. The ASEAN Secretariat is in Jakarta.

2. In which ASEAN member country is Tamil one of the four official languages?

A) Malaysia

B) Singapore

C) Myanmar

D) Indonesia

Answer: B – Explanation: Singapore – English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil. Malaysia has Tamil schools, but its official language is Malay.

3. In which year were India–ASEAN ties raised to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership?

A) 2022

B) 2012

C) 2018

D) 2015

Answer: A – Explanation: 2022 (30th year of ties). 1992 – sectoral dialogue; 1995 – full dialogue partner; 2012 – Strategic Partnership.

4. Where was the first East Asia Summit, with India taking part from the start, held in 2005?

A) Hanoi

B) Cebu

C) Kuala Lumpur

D) Vientiane

Answer: C – Explanation: Kuala Lumpur (14 Dec 2005). The US and Russia joined in 2011. The ASEAN chair hosts it every year.

5. Which country became ASEAN's 11th member in October 2025?

A) Papua New Guinea

B) Sri Lanka

C) Bangladesh

D) Timor-Leste

Answer: D – Explanation: Timor-Leste (East Timor) – admitted at the 47th ASEAN Summit; capital Dili. It became independent in 2002.

Sources: PMO (pmindia.gov.in, 12 Nov 2026); ANI (16 Nov 2026); Business Standard (16 Nov 2026); News On AIR (26 Oct 2025). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.