

IMT-GT NEWSLETTER

Connecting Borders. Empowering Future.



The 16th IMT-GT Summit

27 May 2025 | Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The 16th IMT-GT Summit stood as a defining milestone in the subregion's journey toward deeper economic integration, enhanced connectivity, and sustainable development.

Under the Chairmanship of H.E Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Summit brought together the Leaders of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, joined by ADB President and Secretary-General of ASEAN, highlighting three strategic cooperation priorities:

1. Enhancing physical and digital connectivity;
2. Promoting sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture; and
3. Strengthening digital skills and innovation to drive inclusive growth.

A central highlight was the signing of the *Framework of Cooperation (FOC) in Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine (CIQ)* - a landmark agreement aimed at harmonising border procedures, eliminating bottlenecks, and streamlining the movement of goods and people across IMT-GT.

Signing of the FOC in CIQ

The agreement was signed by the three IMT-GT Signing Ministers: H.E. Airlangga Hartarto (Indonesia), H.E. Rafizi Ramli (Malaysia), and H.E. Julapun Amornvivat (Thailand).

Developed under the CIQ Sub-Working Group within the mandate of the Working Group on Trade & Investment Facilitation (WGTI), the FOC represents a coordinated response to the growing demands for enhanced connectivity, regional competitiveness, and deeper economic integration.

By reducing procedural barriers at borders, the framework paves the way for more efficient logistics, improved tourism flows, and enhanced investor confidence across the subregion. It also reinforces IMT-GT's alignment with the goals of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and marks a decisive step toward achieving the IMT-GT Vision 2036.



"We emphasise the necessity of deeper integration, competitiveness, and resilience to navigate uncertainties and seize emerging trade opportunities."

— IMT-GT Joint Leaders' Statement 2025



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Centre for IMT-GT Subregional Cooperation (CIMT)

A Message from the Director of CIMT

Welcome to the first edition of the IMT-GT Newsletter! Our goal is to share information and updates on the various activities under the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) platform on a more periodic basis. The first half of 2025 marks a defining moment for IMT-GT which serves as good start for the newsletter.

From the successful 16th IMT-GT Summit in Kuala Lumpur to transformative efforts in green cities development, halal digitalisation, youth empowerment, and inclusive tourism, the Triangle is evolving into a resilient and connected community that values people-to-people connection as much as economic progress. Partnership remains our foundation, uniting governments, businesses, academia, and communities.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and the information provided, which may spur ideas for future collaboration under the IMT-GT umbrella. As we move forward, our mission is clear: sustain momentum, deepen integration, and deliver meaningful outcomes that benefit our people today and tomorrow. We are not merely building an economic subregion — we are cultivating a shared home of opportunity, innovation, and hope.



Sincerely,
Amri Bukhairi Bakhtiar



The 18th IMT-GT Strategic Planning Meeting

25-27 February 2025 | Putrajaya, Malaysia

The 18th IMT-GT Strategic Planning Meeting (SPM) marked a key milestone in shaping the subregion's development agenda for the year ahead. Chaired by Malaysia, the Meeting brought together delegates from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Asian Development Bank (ADB) to chart a clear course for deeper cooperation and sustainable growth.

Over the course of three days, the delegates engaged in a comprehensive series of discussions, including the National Secretariat Meeting, eight Working Group breakout sessions, and the Senior Officials' Plenary Meeting.

These sessions provided a platform to review progress, address emerging challenges, and align efforts under the Implementation Blueprint 2022-2026.

A highlight of the discussions was the preparation for the signing of two landmark agreements: the *Framework of Cooperation on Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine (CIQ)* and the *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on IMT-GT Palm Oil Cooperation*. Both documents are set to be formalised this year, and expected to significantly boost connectivity, trade facilitation, and sustainable industry practices.

By aligning shared priorities and fostering close collaboration across all working groups, the Meeting reaffirmed IMT-GT's 2036 Vision of an integrated, innovative, inclusive and sustainable subregion.



Stakeholders Engagements, One Dynamic Subregion

In the first half of 2025, CIMT recorded numerous engagements across IMT-GT member countries and a diverse range of external partners including NGOs, diplomatic missions, business entities and international organisations.

Strategic engagements were held with the State Governments of Negeri Sembilan and Selangor, alongside dialogues with the Mayor of Hat Yai and Nakhon Si Thammarat, highlighting CIMT's commitment to collaborate with local leaders to advance shared priorities. Discussion with business entities were also conducted with Asa Niaga Barter Trade Port, the Malaysia-Thailand Business Council (MTBC), and the Malaysia-Aceh Business Council. Equally, outreach with external partners such as the Austrian Embassy in Malaysia, Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries (CPOPC) and Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC) highlighted the subregion's growing visibility and its commitment to fostering global strategic partnership in pursuit of inclusive and sustainable development.



Piloting Sustainable Waste Solutions in IMT-GT Cities

Four cities—Kluang, Kota Bharu, Hat Yai, and Nakhon Si Thammarat—are spearheading sustainable waste management initiatives with support from the City Climate Finance Gap Fund to conduct pre-feasibility studies for Integrated Resource Recovery Centres. In collaboration with UNESCAP, the initiative is preparing finance-ready proposals for climate-friendly waste systems. By leveraging technical expertise, aligning policies, and engaging multiple partners, this pilot is laying the foundation for cleaner, more resilient cities across the subregion.

Promoting IMT-GT Yacht Tourism at TIBS 2025

7-12 January 2025 | Phuket, Thailand

At the Thailand International Boat Show (TIBS), CIMT and tourism authorities from IMT-GT member countries showcased the subregion's potential as a unified yachting destination. Through conference panels and the IMT-GT Booth, the event conveyed a unified message to welcome the world's yachters, with strategic plans underway to strengthen infrastructure, enhance cross-border connectivity, and elevate IMT-GT brand as a premier yachting destination.



Collaboration for Sustainable Waste Solutions

8 January 2025 | Padang, Indonesia

As part of the Working Group on Environment and GCMC initiatives, Andalas University and IGES hosted a workshop on improving circularity and municipal solid waste management. Addressing Padang's 600 tonnes of daily waste, the event explored solutions in recycling, composting, and new technologies. The event reaffirmed IMT-GT's commitment to cross-border collaboration among academia, government, business, and communities in tackling complex waste challenges and advancing long-term sustainability across the subregion.



Tourism Social Media Competition #VisitIMTGT

May 2025

As part of the Visit IMT-GT Year 2023–2025 campaign, CIMT and the Working Group on Tourism launched the “Discover Your Dreams in IMT-GT” social media competition, inviting youths and travel enthusiasts to showcase the subregion’s cultural and natural beauty. Spanning nine categories, the competition attracted diverse creative entries that captured the essence of IMT-GT. In May 2025, 24 winners were announced, helping to shape a fresh narrative of the subregion as a dynamic destination of diversity, creativity, and discovery.

Economic Herb Production & Propagation Management

5-9 May 2025 | South Sumatera, Indonesia

South Sumatra hosted agricultural experts from IMT-GT member countries to advance the cultivation of high-value medicinal herbs. Organised by Indonesia’s Ministry of Agriculture and coordinated under the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-based Industry, the programme featured workshops and field visits, including to Dexa Medica (a leading pharmaceutical company) to share best practices, explore propagation methods, and develop joint plans for strengthening the subregional herb value chain.



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