



Australian High Commission
Malaysia

MEDIA RELEASE

**AUSTRALIA MARKS 111 YEARS OF ANZAC DAY
WITH MALAYSIA**

KUALA LUMPUR, 25 APRIL 2026 – Australia today marked the 111th anniversary of ANZAC Day in Malaysia, with **Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia, Her Excellency Ms Danielle Heinecke**, leading a Dawn Service at Tugu Negara in Kuala Lumpur.

Along with the New Zealand High Commission in Malaysia, Australia commemorates ANZAC Day – one of the most sacred days in the Australian calendar – with commemorative services across Malaysia, including in Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Sandakan and Kota Kinabalu.

This year, services in East Malaysia were observed in the aftermath of devastating fires in Sandakan. The Australian High Commission in Malaysia extends its deepest sympathies to those affected by the fires and its sincere gratitude to first responders assisting impacted communities.

HE Danielle Heinecke said, “It is always a privilege as Australia’s representative to lead the ANZAC Day Dawn Service at Tugu Negara in Kuala Lumpur alongside colleagues from Malaysia, the diplomatic corps and the Australian community in attendance. It is a powerful reminder of the lessons of past conflicts, and the importance of dialogue, diplomacy and cooperation in safeguarding peace.

I am especially mindful that this year’s Sandakan commemorations come as communities recover from a tragic fire. I extend my condolences to the people of Sabah and recognise the bravery of the first responders, as we honour the service and sacrifice of people of all stripes who work to keep communities safe.”

ANZAC Day Services are traditionally held at the breaking of the dawn on 25 April across the world, marking the 1915 landings of the Australian and New Zealand army corps (ANZAC) in Gallipoli, Türkiye during World War I, and honouring all those who have served and sacrificed.

In Malaysia, ANZAC Day has also become an occasion to reflect on the enduring defence partnership between Australia and Malaysia – a relationship that predates the modern state of Malaysia.

In 1945, Australian Special Forces landed in Bario, Sarawak, as part of Operation SEMUT, to help build the local community's resilience at the end of World War II. This was followed by the June 1945 landing of Australian forces in Labuan to support resistance efforts in the last days of the war. Tragically, in August that same year, more than 1,700 Australian service personnel died in the Sandakan Death Marches – a sacrifice honoured each year at Sandakan Day commemorations on 15 August.

This year commemorates the 85th anniversary of the Battle of Kota Bharu, the first major battle of the Pacific War. It also marks 60 years of peace since the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation (Konfrontasi), during which around 3,500 Australians served.

These pages of history have paved the way for today's close defence and security relationship under the Australia-Malaysia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Since the end of World War II, over 70,000 Australian Defence Force personnel have served or trained in Malaysia, including under the Five Power Defence Arrangements, and 5,000 Malaysians have done similarly in Australia. Military officers from both countries are embedded within each other's forces in a unique display of mutual trust and deep operational cooperation – providing an anchor for regional security.

End

Media Imagery: [Anzac Day 2026 - Images](#)

For media enquiries, please contact public-affairs-klpr@dfat.gov.au.