



## **Australian High Commission**

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### **Malaysia**

#### **MEDIA RELEASE**

#### **Chief of Army Visit to Malaysia**

Australia's Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Simon Stuart, AO DSC, is visiting Malaysia from 22-26 April 2025.

On 23 April, Lieutenant General Stuart attended a round-table with strategic thinkers at the University of Malaya. He outlined how Australia is navigating its security and defence as an active middle power and discussed non-traditional security threats and responses.

Lieutenant General Stuart then accompanied Australia's High Commissioner, Her Excellency Danielle Heinecke to Labuan and Sabah to conduct a series of important commemorative events.

Lieutenant General Stuart honoured the fallen at the Labuan War Cemetery. Over 3,900 Australian, allied and local forces who died valiantly fighting for the recovery of Sabah and Sarawak between 1942 and 1945 are buried at this Cemetery. More than half of the headstones are unnamed. The Labuan Memorial honours those who have no known grave.

On 24 April, Lieutenant General Stuart joined senior Government and Malaysian Armed Forces representatives at the Kota Kinabalu Anzac Day Service at the North Borneo War Monument. Followed by a visit to the nearby Sabah, Australia, New Zealand Army Corps (SANZAC) School established by veterans and their families in 1969.

As the sun rises on Anzac Day (25 April), Lieutenant General Stuart will officiate the Dawn Service at the Sandakan Memorial Park located on the site of the Second World War Sandakan prisoner of war camp. Lieutenant General Stuart will be joined by senior Government and Malaysian Armed Forces representatives. Details for the service can be found here: <https://www.dva.gov.au/recognition/commemorations/commemorative-services/overseas-commemorative-services/anzac-day-other-overseas-services/anzac-day-sandakan-memorial-park-sabah-malaysia>.

The Service remembers not only the Australian and British soldiers held as Prisoners of War by imperial Japanese forces, but also the courageous local communities who aided and died with

them both in the war camp and on the death marches to Ranau. The event stands as one of the worst atrocities ever inflicted on Australians in war. Of the more than 2,400 prisoners alive at the beginning of 1945, only six survived, and only because they escaped into the jungle and were sheltered by local communities.

As the sun sets on Anzac Day, Lieutenant General Stuart will join over a hundred Malaysia-Australia Defence Alumni for dinner in Kuala Lumpur. A special occasion to come together and reflect on the strong bond between the Malaysian and Australian Defence Forces, with our deep and enduring Defence cooperation program that continues to support Malaysia and our shared interest in a region that is open, stable and prosperous.

On Anzac Day, Australia commemorates every person, past and present, who has worn the Australian Defence Force uniform. We honour their families and local communities who support and mourn them. We remember that the freedom and liberty we enjoy every day is a debt we owe to their courage, their suffering, their sacrifice, and we declare that they will never be forgotten.

Lest we forget.

***Quote attributable to the Her Excellency Danielle Heinecke, Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia:***

“Anzac Day is an opportunity to reflect on the longstanding defence partnership between Australia and Malaysia, which dates back to World War II.”

**END**

Media note:

Imagery will be available via this [link](#).

Australia’s Chief of Army’s Anzac Day Dawn Service Address at Sandakan Memorial Park will be uploaded here: <https://www.army.gov.au/news-and-events/speeches-and-transcripts>.