

India-Indonesia

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India-Indonesia: Uniting Through History, Security, and Trade

Context:

Indonesian President **Prabowo Subianto** has arrived in **India** ahead of the **76th Republic Day celebrations** in **New Delhi**, where he will be the **chief guest**. This visit marks a significant moment in the evolving bilateral relationship between **India** and **Indonesia**, which has been built on a foundation of historical, cultural, economic, and strategic ties.

India - Indonesia Bilateral Relationship

Historical and Cultural Bonds:

- **India and Indonesia** share a relationship that spans over two **millennia**, deeply rooted in **cultural and historical ties**.
- **Hinduism, Buddhism, and later Islam** traveled to **Indonesia** from **India**, shaping its **religious and cultural landscape**.
- The **epics Ramayana and Mahabharata** have significantly influenced Indonesian art, folklore, and culture, creating a unique connection between the two nations.
- Post-independence, both nations aspired for **political sovereignty, economic self-sufficiency, and independent foreign policies**, which led them to become strong advocates in the **Non-Aligned Movement**.

Strategic and Diplomatic Engagements:

High-Level Visits and Agreements:

- **2018: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jakarta** led to the signing of the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**, highlighting a shared vision for **Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation**.
- **2024: Prime Minister Modi and President Prabowo Subianto** held discussions during the **G20 Summit**, emphasizing economic and security cooperation, strengthening mutual commitments to **regional stability and economic growth**.

Key takeaways:

- **India and Indonesia** are committed to strengthening their partnership through regular high-level engagements and agreements.

- Their discussions underscore the importance of a stable and cooperative relationship in the Indo-Pacific region.
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Defense and Security Cooperation:

India and Indonesia have a long-standing defense relationship that was formalized in **1951** and has been strengthened through further agreements in **2001** and **2018**. Key initiatives include:

- **Joint Military Exercises:** Exercises such as **Garuda Shakti** (Army), **Samudra Shakti** (Navy), and coordinated patrols like **IND-INDO CORPAT**.
 - **Defense Industry Collaboration:** The **India-Indonesia Defense Industry Exhibition** held in **2024** highlighted opportunities for cooperation in **defense technology** and **manufacturing**.
 - These efforts demonstrate the shared **concerns** over regional security, particularly in the **Indo-Pacific**.
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Economic and Trade Relations:

Bilateral Trade:

- **Indonesia** is India's **second-largest trading partner** in the ASEAN region, with **trade valued at \$29.4 billion in 2023-24**. Major trade includes:
 - **Indian Imports:** Coal, crude palm oil, and rubber from Indonesia.
 - **Indian Exports:** Refined petroleum, telecommunication equipment, and agricultural products to Indonesia.

Investment and Connectivity:

- **Indian Investments:** Indian businesses have invested over **\$1.56 billion** in sectors such as **mining, textiles, and infrastructure** in Indonesia.
- **Connectivity Boost:** The establishment of **direct flights** between major cities like **Mumbai-Jakarta** and **Delhi-Bali** has enhanced **tourism** and **people-to-people ties**.

Key takeaway:

- Economic and trade relations continue to grow, with both nations benefiting from enhanced investment and connectivity.
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Cultural and Educational Collaboration:

- **Cultural Engagement:** India operates **two cultural centers** in **Jakarta** and **Bali**, promoting Indian cultural practices such as **yoga, classical dance, and music**, which foster mutual understanding.
- **Educational Cooperation:** Indonesia is a major recipient of **Indian scholarships** through programs like **ITEC** and **ICCR**, with discussions ongoing for **higher education MoUs** to strengthen knowledge-sharing and academic cooperation.

Multilateral Cooperation:

- India and Indonesia actively collaborate in **multilateral forums** such as **G20**, **ASEAN**, and **IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association)**.
 - Their partnership extends to issues like **maritime security**, **sustainable development**, and **regional stability**.
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Future Prospects:

In **2024**, **India** and **Indonesia** commemorate **75 years** of diplomatic relations, which reflects both nations' shared history and a forward-looking partnership.

Key Focus Areas:

- Strengthening **trade**, **defense**, and **cultural cooperation**.
 - Continuing efforts to enhance **regional stability** and **economic growth** in the **Indo-Pacific**.
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Conclusion:

The **India-Indonesia bilateral relationship** exemplifies a unique blend of **historical camaraderie** and **strategic collaboration**. As two **vibrant democracies** and **emerging economies**, their partnership plays a key role in shaping both **regional** and **global** affairs. With shared values and mutual respect, **India** and **Indonesia** continue to deepen their ties, ensuring a prosperous and peaceful future together. Their evolving relationship stands as a model for **global cooperation** and **mutual growth**.

