

# India and Indonesia: Strengthening Bilateral Relations

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## India - Indonesia Latest News

- Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto arrived in India ahead of the 76th Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi, where he will be the chief guest.

## Historical and Cultural Bonds

- India and Indonesia share a relationship that spans over two millennia, rooted in deep cultural and historical ties.
- Hinduism, Buddhism, and later Islam traveled to Indonesia from India, shaping its cultural and religious landscape.
- The epics **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata** continue to influence Indonesian art and folklore, creating a unique cultural connection.
- Post-independence, both nations shared aspirations for political sovereignty, economic self-sufficiency, and independent foreign policies, becoming significant voices in the **Non-Aligned Movement**.

## Strategic and Diplomatic Engagements

- **High-Level Visits and Agreements**
- Recent years have witnessed enhanced diplomatic exchanges:
- **2018:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jakarta led to the signing of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and a shared vision on Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation.
- **2024:** Prime Minister Modi and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto held discussions on the sidelines of the G20 Summit, emphasizing economic and security cooperation.
- These engagements underline mutual commitment to regional stability and economic growth.

## Defense and Security Cooperation

- India and Indonesia have a long-standing defense relationship, formalized in 1951 and further strengthened by agreements in 2001 and 2018. Key initiatives include:
  - **Joint Military Exercises:** Exercises like **Garuda Shakti** (Army), **Samudra Shakti** (Navy), and coordinated patrols (**IND-INDO CORPAT**).
  - **Defense Industry Collaboration:** The inaugural India-Indonesia Defense Industry Exhibition in 2024 showcased opportunities for cooperation in defense technology and manufacturing.
  - This partnership highlights shared concerns over regional security, particularly in the Indo-Pacific.

## Economic and Trade Relations

### Bilateral Trade

- Indonesia is India's second-largest trading partner in ASEAN. Trade between the two nations was **\$29.4 billion in 2023-24**, driven by:
  - **Indian Imports:** Coal, crude palm oil, and rubber.
  - **Indian Exports:** Refined petroleum, telecommunication equipment, and agricultural products.
- **Investment and Connectivity**
- **Indian Investments:** Indian businesses have invested over \$1.56 billion in sectors like mining, textiles, and infrastructure.
- **Connectivity Boost:** Direct flights between major cities like Mumbai-Jakarta and Delhi-Bali have strengthened people-to-people ties and boosted tourism.

## Cultural and Educational Collaboration

- **Cultural Engagement:** India operates two cultural centers in Jakarta and Bali, promoting yoga, classical dance, and music. Joint celebrations of International Yoga Day and conferences on shared heritage underscore the cultural bond.
- **Educational Cooperation:** Indonesia is a key recipient of Indian scholarships under programs like ITEC and ICCR. Discussions on higher education MoUs aim to deepen collaboration in knowledge sharing.

## Multilateral Cooperation

- India and Indonesia are active participants in multilateral forums like the G20, ASEAN, and IORA.
- Their partnership extends to maritime security, sustainable development, and regional stability.

## Future Prospects

- India and Indonesia commemorate 75 years of diplomatic relations in 2024, with numerous initiatives celebrating their shared history and future aspirations.
- Strengthening trade, defense, and cultural cooperation remains central to their relationship, ensuring mutual growth and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

## Conclusion

- The India-Indonesia bilateral relationship exemplifies a blend of historical camaraderie and strategic collaboration.
- As two vibrant democracies and emerging economies, their partnership is pivotal in shaping the regional and global landscape.
- With shared values and mutual respect, India and Indonesia continue to deepen their ties, fostering a prosperous and peaceful future.

## India and Indonesia: Strengthening Bilateral Relations FAQs

**Q1.** What are the historical and cultural links between India and Indonesia?

**Ans.** India and Indonesia share over two millennia of cultural ties, with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam shaping Indonesia's heritage, along with influences from Indian epics like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

**Q2.** What is the significance of the India-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership?

**Ans.** The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, signed in 2018, emphasizes maritime cooperation, economic ties, and regional stability in the Indo-Pacific.

**Q3.** How do India and Indonesia collaborate in defense and security?

**Ans.** The nations conduct joint military exercises like *Garuda Shakti* and *Samudra Shakti* and have a strong defense industry collaboration, highlighted by the Defense Industry Exhibition in 2024.

**Q4.** What is the current status of India-Indonesia trade relations?

**Ans.** Bilateral trade reached \$38.84 billion in 2022-23, with key exports including refined petroleum and telecommunication equipment, and imports such as coal and crude palm oil.

**Q5.** How do India and Indonesia engage in cultural and educational cooperation?

**Ans.** India promotes cultural ties through centers in Jakarta and Bali and offers scholarships under ITEC and ICCR, fostering academic and cultural exchange.

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