

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto arrives to take part in Republic Day celebrations

He will be hosted at Hyderabad House on January 25, where he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead respective delegations during an official-level dialogue.

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KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE



Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto. | Photo Credit: Reuters

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto arrived in India on Thursday (January 23, 2025) ahead of the 76th Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi on Sunday, where he will be the chief guest.

This is the first state visit to India by Mr. Subianto. He is the fourth Indonesian President to be the chief guest at the Republic Day event.

As a special gesture, a 352-member marching and band contingent from Indonesia will take part in the parade.

Mr. Subianto will be hosted at Hyderabad House on Saturday, where he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead respective delegations during an official-level dialogue.

During the meeting at Hyderabad House, the two sides will sign a number of MoUs, sources said. Mr. Subianto will attend the “At Home” reception by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar will also call on the visiting dignitary.

Official engagements for Mr. Subianto will begin on Friday, when External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is scheduled to call on him.

Old allies

India was the first major country to recognise Indonesia, and New Delhi led an international campaign for recognition of Indonesia’s Independence at the international level in the late 1940s.

The relation received an early boost when President Sukarno was invited to be the chief guest at the first Republic Day celebrations on January 26, 1950, following the adoption of the new Constitution of India.

Over the past decades, Indonesia has emerged as an important pillar of India’s Act East Policy and regular interactions have been held between officials and military personnel of the two sides. Indonesia is one of the largest trading partners of India in the ASEAN region, with bilateral trade touching \$29.4 billion in 2023-24.

Mr. Modi visited Indonesia in 2018, when the relation was elevated to the level of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, and the two sides adopted the Shared Vision of India-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

The same year India and Indonesia signed the Defence Cooperation Agreement, which has boosted defence ties and led to staff-level talks between the Air Forces, the Navies, and the Armies of both sides.

Indonesia is home to one of the oldest Indian diaspora communities in the ASEAN region and the two sides are ancient cultural partners. The visit by Mr. Prabowo, according to sources, will give an opportunity to review collaboration in areas such as defence, security, trade and investment, healthcare, digital technologies, energy, culture connectivity, tourism, and people-to-people relations. The third India-Indonesia CEO Forum will be held on the sidelines of the presidential visit.

Indonesia is one of the oldest aviation partners of India from the southeast Asian region and direct flight connectivity between the two sides were started soon after bilateral relation took off in the late 1940s and the early 1950s. Indians are also among the biggest groups of tourists visiting Indonesian destinations like Bali.

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