



BILATERAL RELATIONS
INDIA - INDONESIA

INTRODUCTION

India and Indonesia established diplomatic relations in 1951. Both countries are neighbours, as India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands share a maritime border with Indonesia along the Andaman Sea.

The Indian-Indonesian relationship stretches back for almost two millennia. In 1950, the first President of Indonesia, Sukarno, called upon the peoples of Indonesia and India to "intensify the cordial relations" that had existed between the two countries "for more than 1000 years" before they had been "disrupted" by colonial powers.

India has an embassy in Jakarta and Indonesia operates an embassy in Delhi. India regards Indonesia as a key member of ASEAN. Both nations had agreed to establish a strategic partnership. The two countries have significant bilateral trade.

India and Indonesia are among the largest democracies in the world. Both are member states of the G-20, the E7 (countries), the Non-aligned Movement, and the United Nations.



HISTORY

Archaeology

South Indian origin rouletted ware at the site of Simberan, Bali has produced a carbon dating of 660 BCE (+/- 100). The population exchanges and intermarriages in the island of Bali between Indonesians and Indians was has been archaeologically dated to 2nd century BCE.



RELIGIOUS TIES

The ties between Indonesia and India date back to the times of the Ramayana, "Yawadvipa" (Java) is mentioned in India's earliest epic, the Ramayana. Sugriva, the chief of Rama's army dispatched his men to Yawadvipa, the island of Java, in search of Sita. Indians had visited Indonesia since ancient times, and ancient Indonesian (Austronesian people) has embarked in maritime trade in Southeast Asian seas and Indian Ocean. The Ancient Indians spread Hinduism and many other aspects of Indian culture including the Sanskrit and Brahmi Script. The trace of Indian influences is most evident in great numbers of Sanskrit loanwords in Indonesian languages.

The name Indonesia derives from the Latin Indus, meaning "India", and the Greek nesos, meaning "island". (due to the similarity of the culture in both regions). The name dates to the 18th century, far predating the formation of independent Indonesia. During the Srivijaya era, many Indonesians studied at Nalanda University in India.

Indonesia entered its historical period after the adoption of Pallawa script and Sanskrit language from India as evidence in some of earliest inscriptions dated from Indonesia's oldest kingdoms such as the Yupa of Kutai, Tugu of Tarumanagara and historical records of Kalingga. Indianised Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms, such as Srivijaya, Medang, Sunda and Majapahit were the predominant governments in Indonesia, and lasted from 200[13] to the 16th century, with the last remaining being in Bali.

The Indian Epics; the Ramayana and the Mahabharata play an important role in Indonesian culture and history, and are popular amongst Indonesians to this day. In the open theatres of the Prambanan in Java, Javanese Muslims perform the Ramayana dance during full moon nights. An example of deep Hindu-Buddhist influence in Indonesian history is 9th century Borobudur and Prambanan temples. Even after the adoption of Islam, the link between two countries remained strong; not only because India has a significant population of Muslims herself. Indonesian Islamic architecture, especially in Sumatra, has been deeply influenced by Indian Mughal architecture, evident in the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in Aceh and Medan's Great Mosque.

Cultural admiration is not one-sided however, Indians also relate closely to Indonesian culture, especially Hindu Balinese culture. During his visit to Java and Bali in 1927, Rabindranath Tagore, an Indian poet, was so enamored to Bali and said "Wherever I go on the island, I see God". Then 23 years later in 1950, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru hailed Bali as the "Morning of the World".

India and Indonesia officially opened the diplomatic relations since 3 March 1951. In 1955, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Indonesian President Sukarno were among the five founders of the Non-aligned Movement.

Throughout their shared history, most of relations between India and Indonesia were harmonious and peaceful, except during 1965 war with India. At that time, Indonesia offered to provide Pakistan with military help, and 'to seize Andaman and Nicobar Islands' of India so as to distract it from the Kashmir front, eventually mobilising submarines to help Pakistan. A maritime boundary agreement between the two countries was issued in New Delhi on 14 January 1977.

President of Indonesia Sukarno was the first chief guest at the annual Republic Day parade of India in 1950. In the year 2011, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was the chief guest for the same event.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

India and Indonesia, united by historic cultural ties, have signed strategic partnership agreement to enhance cooperation in the national and maritime security and safety, trade connectivity, infrastructure and economic development. India's southernmost territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands lies close to Aceh province of Indonesia, an area which is an important global trade route.

In May 2018, "Shared Vision of Maritime Cooperation in the Indo Pacific" agreement was signed when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Indonesia. Subsequently, Indian Navy and Indonesian Navy have been hosting bilateral "Samudra Shakti" naval exercise since November 2018 including in Java Sea and Andaman Sea. These exercises are a significant enhancement of operational engagement between these two navies after their 2002 "Ind-Indo Corpat" agreement.

India and Indonesia are also jointly developing Sabang Deep sea Port, and Indian naval ships have been regularly visiting this port after the signing of the agreement. Several Indian navy ships undertook naval exercises and visits to Indonesia e.g. a destroyer INS Rana in 2002, INS Sumitra in July 2018, INS VIJIT in 2019.



ECONOMIC RELATIONS

India and Indonesia, united by historic cultural ties, have signed strategic partnership agreement to enhance cooperation in the national and maritime security and safety, trade connectivity, infrastructure and economic development. India's southernmost territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands lies close to Aceh province of Indonesia, an area which is an important global trade route.

In May 2018, "Shared Vision of Maritime Cooperation in the Indo Pacific" agreement was signed when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Indonesia. Subsequently, Indian Navy and Indonesian Navy have been hosting bilateral "Samudra Shakti" naval exercise since November 2018 including in Java Sea and Andaman Sea. These exercises are a significant enhancement of operational engagement between these two navies after their 2002 "Ind-Indo Corpat" agreement.

India and Indonesia are also jointly developing Sabang Deep sea Port, and Indian naval ships have been regularly visiting this port after the signing of the agreement. Several Indian navy ships undertook naval exercises and visits to Indonesia e.g. a destroyer INS Rana in 2002, INS Sumitra in July 2018, INS VIJIT in 2019.

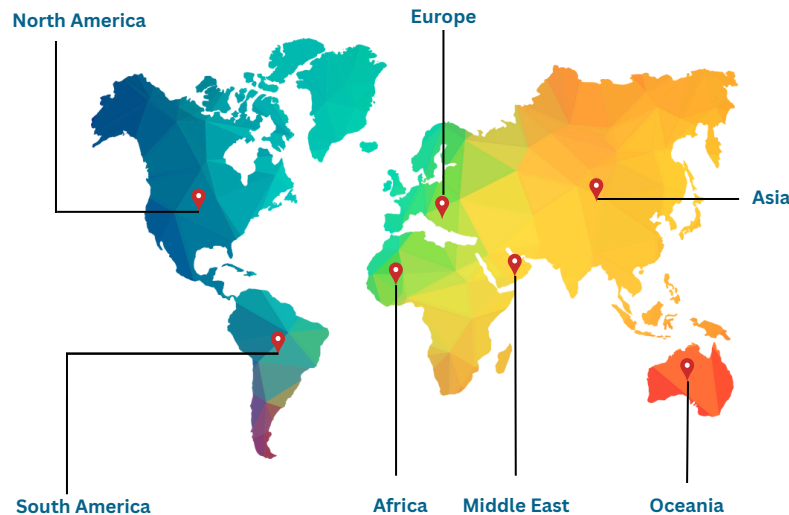


CULTURE

Historically, Indonesian archipelago was heavily influenced by dharmic civilization of India. For example, Ramayana is a major theme in Indonesian dance drama traditions, especially in Java and Bali.



SERVING CLIENTS WORLDWIDE



The information contained herein is of a general nature. Although we endeavor to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. The information is not offered as an advice on any matter, and no one should act or fail to act based on such information without appropriate legal advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation. The information does not make us responsible or liable for any errors and/or omissions, whether it is now or in the future. We do not assume any responsibility and/or liability for any consequences.

Key Contact



Surendra Singh Chandrawat

Managing Partner

✉ surendra@chandrawatpartners.com

Connect Surendra on



Chandrawat & Partners is a leading and rapidly growing full-service firm providing high quality professional and corporate services to foreign and local clients, representing companies and individuals in a wide range of sectors through separate entities established in various countries worldwide.

Copyright © 2025 | All rights reserved | Chandrawat & Partners | Email: enquiries@chandrawatpartners.com | Website: www.chandrawatpartners.com

Follow us on:

